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ITS SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

WHEN the ex-Lord Mayor, Mr. CHALLIS, asked Literature and Art to take tea with him at the Mansion-house, some of the professors of the former branch expressed great indignation at the patronage of a mayor, and kept aloof from the "splendid hospitality" of the scene. Those thin-skinned gentlemen may set themselves at ease now, when lo! Mr. CHALLIS patronises his Royal Highness Prince ALBERT with a Hyde-park statue movement; and his Royal Highness, if he do not accept, gives no sign of wincing under Mr. C.'s condescension. Since the discussion on the question "Ought CROMWELL to have a Statue?" the Literary World has not been so profoundly agitated by any sculptural controversy; the *Times* and *Examiner* unite to denounce the movement as sycophantic; and here and there an angry newspaper correspondent uses very strong language, and very plain English indeed. When the Railway-King had fallen from his throne and high estate, Mr. THOMAS CARLYLE brought out an extremely indignant *Latter-Day Pamphlet* on *Hudson's Statue*: why does not that eminent writer, under opposite circumstances, now bring out a *Last Day Pamphlet* on "Prince ALBERT's Statue?"

*The Last Fruit off an Old Tree* is the title of Mr. WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR's new work—a collection of recent scraps, gathered from far and near. Does the veteran writer intend, by such a title, to signify that he is making his farewell bow to the Literary World? Ah! we shall have more "last fruit," as long as there are Czars to fight Sultans, and sycophants to propose statues to royal personages. "A few days ago," says Mr. LANDOR in his new book, "I received a most courteous invitation to be named on a committee for erecting a statue to Jenner. It was impossible for me to decline it; and equally was it impossible to abstain from the observations which I am now about to state. I recommended that the statue should be placed before a public hospital, expressing my sense of impropriety in confounding so great a benefactor of mankind, in any street or square, or avenue, with the Dismemberer of America and his worthless sons. Nor would I willingly see him among the worn-out steam engines of parliamentary debates."

... Shall we never see the day when OLIVER and WILLIAM mount the chargers of CHARLES and GEORGE, and when a royal swindler is superseded by the purest and most exalted of our heroes, BLAKE?" Then the austere *Athenæum*, commenting on this passage, adds—"Thoughts like these are growing familiar to many minds beyond the hills that overhang Bath"—where abides the veteran republican. Singular inconsistency! This is the very journal that greeted with fulsome flattery the announcement of the new statue-movement. "Considering," said the *Athenæum*, "the ready response of men of all ranks and parties, and the liberal way in which promises of assistance arise at the head-quarters of the committee, there is ample ground for anticipating the collection of such a fund as will not merely procure a statue of the Prince, who was the presiding genius at our new Olympian emulation—the rivalry of science and industry—but a grand work of art, a work worthy of being charged to future generations with the story of our times in its most consummate and beautiful expression." What mighty fine writing! Perhaps, however, to future generations, the most memorable incident in the "story of our time" will be that, just after an enormous jubilee in honour of the peace and industry of the world—the peace became a general war, and the industry struck,—nominally for higher wages, but really out of profound discontent with its whole relation to the world around it. "Ten per cent. and no surrender" was inscribed on the banners of the Preston operatives—probably the most singular *in hoc signo vincetis* ever known or heard of—"charged with the story of our time in its not most consummate and beautiful expression!"

Why should English literary men recommend the erection of statues to living English royal personages? What have living English royal personages done for them and their order? Yawned at Shakespeare performed at Windsor under the auspices of Mr. CHARLES KEAN, made Mr. ALFRED TENNYSON Poet-Laureate, and the author of *Pelham* a baronet! LOUIS-PHILIPPE had THIERS and GUIZOT for his Prime Ministers: well, perhaps we shall live to see like honours bestowed on GLADSTONE and DISRAELI! The KING of PRUSSIA tried his blandishments on HERWEGH and FREILIGRATH: here we had Mr. HERPETH DIXON missioned to Lancashire to "explain the object" of the Great Exhibition. It was the same monarch that made BUNSEN his Minister of Education—an office the functions of which in this country devolve upon Lord JOHN RUSSELL. The

Czar NICHOLAS (before he took to quoting from the Psalms in his manifestos) made the poet PUSHKIN (who did not much relish the office) a "gentleman of the chamber:" and here Dr. LYON PLAYFAIR occupies a similar post. Who would grumble?

"Oh! we are a practical people, and don't want literary men, except to amuse us: we can do very well without intellect. Supply and demand will regulate the lowest element of our financial existence. Mr. CORPOCK and Mr. BROWN will always procure us ample relays of members of Parliament. We have at least one 'divinely-gifted man' at the head of affairs—Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER; and one poet to hymn the praises of royalty—Mr. ALFRED TENNYSON; and, as an expounder of 'the Laws of GOD,' we have a certain nobleman zealous in behalf of good farming." Very good, friends; 'tis well you are satisfied. But the whole thing is breaking up; and Mr. CORPOCK and Mr. BROWN are on their last legs.

And yet the most thinking people have some right on their side. In the troubles of '48, poets, historians and pamphleteers, did not make first-rate governors for France; nor were the German professors able to direct the storm which shook their fatherland in the same memorable year. The United States rejoice in a government of "public opinion," shaped by the modern form of the man of letters, the newspaper editor. And with what result? The result is patent to all the world in the recent fact that the American ambassadorship to Paris is not only being sought for, but is possibly, they say, to be given to, the editor of the *New York Herald*, Mr. JAMES GORDON BENNETT! Expressive silence, muse his praise.

In the general decay of the professions, and the decadence of old authority, what is to be done with the literary man? The present writer does not profess ability to give an answer. Between LOUIS NAPOLEON's plan of shooting and deporting them—between that and the American plan of sending them as ambassadors to Paris—perhaps there might be found some feasible middle course, if persons in authority cared to look for it.

RAMBLES IN THE BY-WAYS OF  
LITERATURE.

(Continued from p. 560.)

THE Frenchman, Herbinot, counsellor at the Châtelet in the seventeenth century, had conceived the project of a vast etymological dictionary, in which, after having sought to prove that all the French words were derived from the Greek, he attempted to prove that they all proceeded from the Hebrew. "Soon," says De Boze, the French writer and archaeologist, "the unfortunate man's brain having become perfectly turned by dwelling so long on this prodigious number of crabbed etymological niceties, he at last fell into a state of hopeless insanity; and having, as he said himself, no need of any other food save his Greek and Hebrew roots, he obstinately refused to take any sort of nourishment, and at last died of starvation."

The deaths of certain individuals killed on the field of battle have been enveloped with mystery. For instance, it is affirmed that it was not from the enemy's ranks proceeded the shots which killed Gustavus Adolphus at the battle of Lutzen, and Charles XII. in the trenches of Frederickshall. The first, as it is generally supposed, was assassinated by Francis Albert, Duke of Saxe-Lauenburg, who afterwards passed into the service of Austria; the second, who was found with his hand still firmly grasping the hilt of his sword—an evident sign that he had been attacked at close quarters—was stricken by a hand which to this day has remained unknown.

The death of the Comte de Soissons, killed at the battle of La Marfée, is no less singular. His army had put to flight the royal troops. "After the combat," says Montglat, "he was viewing at a distance the complete overthrow and rout of the French in the midst of his domestics, when all at once he fell from his horse stone dead, without anyone being able to discover from what quarter the blow which killed him had proceeded, for none of those surrounding him were ever able to give a clear account of the matter. All that they could say was, that they had heard a shot fired, and that they saw a horseman pass, and their master at the same instant fall from his saddle; and that they discovered a wound in his forehead; and that his face was burned with the powder—an indubitable proof that he had been fired at at point blank distance. The mysterious circumstances attending this death," adds the chronicler, "have never been cleared up, and have given rise to various opinions and speculations."

A very natural cause of the death of the Count has been found in the supposition that he might have accidentally killed himself while raising, as he was accustomed to do, the visor of his helmet with the pistol which he held in his hand. But this explanation was insufficient to satisfy people's minds at an epoch when it was the custom to make Cardinal Richelieu responsible for all the deaths which occurred happily for himself. It has been then imagined that the Comte de Soissons was assassinated by order of the minister. The *Memoirs* of the Abbé Arnaud contain a very curious anecdote on this subject.

"One day," says he, "that I was on guard at Verdun, at the gate which bears the name of La

*Porte à Chaussée*, there arrived two cavaliers, who gave us the first tidings of the battle of Sedan. Every one knows what took place there, and how that Monsieur le Cardinal was consoled for the loss incurred when he was told that M. le Comte de Soissons had been killed there; but I have never met with anyone who was acquainted with a certain particular which I am now about to relate, and which may give rise to reflections touching the death of the Count, of which so much has been spoken with so little certainty. One of those agents whom M. des Noyers employed in executing various commissions, and who used to bring us money occasionally to Verdun, to pay our men, told me one day that, two or three months subsequent to the loss of this battle, M. des Noyers sent for him, and directed him to repair, on a certain day and hour indicated, with a very large sum of money in gold, and bills for a still higher amount, to a certain part of the mountain of Doncherry, at the foot of a cross, from whence a view is obtainable of the entire city; informing him that he would there see a man dressed in mourning upon a black horse, that this man would accost him, and that he was to give him all the money he should demand. The agent was there at the appointed time. The man in black shortly afterwards appeared: he inquired of the agent if he had not an order to pay him some money; the agent replied in the affirmative, and asked him in return if he would be satisfied with so much (I do not recollect the precise sum). The horseman told him that this was not enough, and that he would require so much. The agent gave him what he demanded, and they separated; and since then they have not met, nor has the agent ever been able to learn any tidings of his strange client. This adventure is, in my opinion, worthy of serious consideration, as so great a recompense could only have been given for some important service."

It has been stated by some writers, that when Charles III. of Spain ascended the throne in 1759, his brother Ferdinand VI. was still alive. They relate that, this last sovereign having fallen into a state of insanity, the Queen Dowager, Elizabeth Farnese, second wife of Philip V., secretly induced the Cortes and the grandees to substitute for Ferdinand, who was only her son-in-law, her own son Charles, then King of the two Sicilies. Ferdinand was secretly transported to the convent of the Casa del Campo, whilst a magnificent funeral ceremony was performed over his supposed remains; and he is believed to have lived some years in this retreat. They add that Charles III. used frequently to disappear while out hunting, and, having on one occasion been followed by some inquisitive courtiers, was perceived conversing in the convent garden with a man whom they at once recognised for Ferdinand.

Many curious anecdotes have been related respecting the last moments of certain well-known or eminent personages. We know that in France, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was considered quite the thing to leave the world with a *bon mot* upon the lips. We will present our readers with a few out of the many examples which may be found in the memoirs of contemporary historians.

Saint Gelais, it is said, played on the lute and sang Latin verses just before dying; the Emperor Leopold I. had a concert performed beside his death-bed; the celebrated French actress Madame Favart, who died in 1772, at her last moment composed and set to music her own epitaph; while Des Yvetaux had a saraband performed at his dying hour, in order, as he said, that his soul might pass more gently into eternity.

"They say," writes Tallemant des Reaux, "that Malherbe, an hour before his death, suddenly roused himself from a deep stupor, to correct his hostess—who acted as his nurse—in a word which she had made use of, and which, in his opinion, was not good French; and, on being reproved by his confessor for thinking of such topics at such a time, replied that he could not help it—that he was desirous of maintaining to his death the purity of the French language." Malherbe was a strange man in many respects, and had some singular habits. He usually lodged in a furnished apartment, which, like most places of the kind, was not over-well stocked with chairs, tables, &c.; indeed, he had seldom more than three or four of the former articles of furniture in his room. If anybody called on him when these were occupied, he would shout out through the closed door,—"Wait a few minutes; all my chairs are engaged at present." The method in which he was accustomed to correct his domestic is deserving of mention. He used to allow him ten sous per diem, board-wages, which was considered a very respectable sum in those days, and also twenty crowns a year. Whenever this domestic failed in any duty, Malherbe would lecture him in the following strain: "My friend, when one offends one's master, one offends God; and when one offends God, one must, in order to obtain absolution of one's sin, fast and give alms. It is for this reason that I shall now retain five sous of your board-wages, which sum I shall bestow for you in alms on the poor, in expiation of your sins." He had a curious, and not very agreeable, habit of coughing and spitting while reciting his verses, which led the Chevalier Marini to remark, that he never beheld so moist a man, or so dry a poet.

(To be continued.)

## ENGLISH LITERATURE.

## PHILOSOPHY.

*Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences: being an Exposition of the Principles of the Cours de Philosophie Positive of Auguste Comte.* By G. H. LEWES. London: Henry G. Bohn. (Scientific Library.) 1853.

MR. LEWES has conferred a very questionable boon on the public by introducing this book to its notice. It professes to be an "attempt to popularise the leading ideas of the greatest thinker of modern times." We can see in it little more than a reproduction of the most familiar topics of modern infidelity. But we should be doing neither the teacher nor the apostle justice, if we did not state what seems to us the fair substance of their gospel, while we dispute its authenticity and soundness.

What the old French materialists were to the eighteenth century, Comte and many others of his contemporaries are to the nineteenth. Their school is not a creation, but a continuation and a development. It has changed hands—taken a new name—and adopted new views and new studies, to meet, as the advertisements say, "the requirements of the age." The old French philosophy fell in that mad age when the heads of aristocrats and philosophers were tumbled pell-mell in the sawdust of the basket of the guillotine. Who would have thought that blood to be fruitful of life? Who would have looked for the new phoenix—like, but different—springing from the mingled pollutions of decapitated feudalisms and effete socialisms? Louis Quatorze and Louis Quinze had visited the sins of themselves and their forefathers not more surely on their unlucky descendant, than Voltaire and Helvetius had worked out their own posthumous *reductio ad absurdum* in the wretched fate of Condorcet and the Girondists. But history is a cycle. French monarchy has become, for the time, an exploded indignity; but French empire is the self-chosen panacea of eight millions—a distinction, with a difference for the worse, it may be said. Possibly so; but, however that may be, it is equally clear to us that French philosophy, during the last sixty years, has been following pretty much the same rotatory transit; and, while we profess our total inability to see the substantial distinction between the Materialism which M. Comte discards, and the Positivism which he advocates, we must also profess a corresponding inability to see how the new philosophy, if it be new, is likely to make us wiser or better, or, in Carlyle-language, turn out a futheresome veracity more than the old.

But, if we cannot congratulate M. Comte on the novelty of his doctrines, perhaps we may do so on their antiquity. There is a strange odd flavour of Lucretian atomism about them: a very venerable heathenish sort of Illuminism, reminding us, almost too humorously for the sober seriousness of the subject, of the conjunction of casual bricks and casual lime in *Rejected Addresses*. We have a law of gravitation, it is true, which M. Comte can use, but which Lucretius could not. Here, then, is the triumph of modern science; see how much we have done in 2000 years. The poor heathen had to put up with Chance, and the self-productive principle of a Venus Genitrix, or an universal Pan. The modern philosopher finds out a Law; why should he be so superfluous as to look for a Law Giver?

For M. Comte tells us, and Mr. Lewes also tells us, that things are: that there really is a Heaven above us, although not quite that of the theologians. There is an universe, beyond all doubt they say, studded with myriads of planetary systems, more or less resembling our own. They are no phantasmas: no Berkeleyan doubts as to their materiality haunt the minds of the positive and untranscendental experimentalist. There is also an earth—our earth—on which bipeds, called men, possessing the highest animal development, walk, and wonder—from curious infancy unto unresolved old age—what they are. There are none of your German cobwebs—airy filaments of tobacco-steeped students—in the strong and palpable inductions of M. Comte. As far as the five senses go, his faith is the perfection of a creed. No dark eclipse—no agonising suspense—crosses the placid path of his intuitive convic-

tions on these matters. But when the eye does not see, nor the ear hear, nor the hand feel, nor the developed instinct appreciate; then neither M. Comte, nor Mr. Lewes apparently, can understand how the heart of man can be weak enough to dream of any other philosophy.

Both gentlemen wage hot war with the metaphysicians, or, let us call them once for all, the transcendentalists. And here we can hardly help smiling to see a genuine bit of human nature peeping out—such a bit as Mr. Thackeray would revel in. It reminds us of that part of Mr. Macaulay's History, where James is described as making almost common cause with the Dissenters, in order to combine them with the Roman Catholics against the English Church. M. Comte does not like theologians; but he positively abominates transcendentalists.\* There is more than the *odium theologicum* in the critical jealousy with which Mr. Lewes surveys that dangerous class which will not swear by Locke, and which would confine even Bacon himself to the strict limits of his own physical domain. As for pure Theism and a designing and beneficent First Cause—*nous avons changé tout cela*. We thought of something of the sort in our cradles; and our mothers and schoolmasters used to make us learn it by heart, and beat us well if we did not know it. But when we became smart young men—up to a thing or two, we should rather think—then we had got over our religious measles, and found it very pleasant and conducive to our own self-respect to toss a doubt to and fro in canvassing secondary causes. If we gave up the origin of evil, it was only to set about solving the origin of matter. And precious simpletons you were for your pains, say Messrs. Comte and Lewes; and, indeed, on this latter head we are more than half disposed to agree with them.

But passing by the high and awful mystery of monotheism—not deigning even to allude to the pure and humanising religion of Locke and Newton and Arnold: leaving it at best a terrible doubt whether they hold to either—they join issue at once with the transcendentalists, and say—Let us have no more of this barren verbiage about final and proximate causes: "the true positive spirit consists in always substituting the study of *laws* for that of *causes*; the *how* for the *why*." This is the cardinal tenet of the "new" philosophy. But is it new? Who does not know that Aristotle told us long since not to trouble ourselves about the *δύναμις* as long as we could get the *ἐνέργεια*? What does it contain which has not been said, again and again, by every man of science from Bacon downwards?

If the philosophy of Comte had been merely a scientific commentary on this text, we should have had little to object to it, and, probably, much to praise. There are remarks on astronomy, chemistry, and vital dynamics in this book, a tithe of which would be enough to show that he and his English exponent have physical minds, if we may use the phrase, of the highest order. A distinct treatise by either, on any one of the many physical topics which are touched on, would, doubtless, be a work of mark and note. Even on the delicate and perplexing theory of organic development we would listen to them respectfully, and dissent, if we did dissent, with doubt and self-distrust. But how is it possible to reason calmly or even seriously with men who, while they disclaim all *à priori* argument, start with assumptions which dethrone the Deity, destroy the immateriality and distinct essence of spirit, and dogmatically base all knowledge on experience, and all experience on sensation and the disputable philosophy of Locke? We cannot here help the unsavoury thought of the shoemaker beyond his last; or of the anti-climax of an Anti-Corn-law League coming out as a Peace Society. Physics are not metaphysics. Don't smile at the truism, gentlemen; for you seem to have forgotten it. There is an old book which says there are bodies celestial as well as terrestrial. Even according to your own views, it is at least conceivable; and you have given us nothing but innuendoes to disprove the theory. You will keep to the world of matter, we think, if you are wise; and there we shall always be happy to listen to

\* The former, he thinks, cannot hurt him; the latter may. And so in a later part of his work he throws the one a sop of natural religion; but no quarter is offered to the other.

you. You are rather of the earth—in fact, not to mince matters, you are decidedly and exclusively earthy. "Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the sun," and all that sort of thing, as much as you like, and count on our very best thanks for your trouble; but do not tempt us to break good manners in honest indignation, and to quote the *discite non temere divos* against you.

The truth is, that M. Comte is the victim, to some extent, of his own ingenious theory; and, if he bends his facts to suit it, as he undoubtedly does, his excuse must be the common one of paternity. That theory amounts to this: that there are three stages of transition in the psychological history of man—the Theological or Supernatural, the Metaphysical, and the Positive. Infancy corresponds to the first; youth to the second; mature and sinewy manhood to the third. Thus it is in individuals; but so it has also been, he says, in the growth of successive generations. He points to the primitive world of the East, and sees in it nothing but the infantile creeds of Fetichism and Polytheism. He passes on, and notices the same essential spirit paramount, but refined to the vague spiritualities of monotheism. Then begins the second epoch, when the growing yearning for the definite sought in vain for its solution in scholasticism and Aristotle. The child is growing up; at length he walks with the certain form and step of man. He is fairly wearied of these futile efforts to understand the unintelligible.

Confidence is the law of youth: compromise that of manhood. He comes down from the rarified atmosphere where he has been breathing the finer gases of the cloud—he sets his foot firmly on the earth, to which attraction fixes it, and begins anew with the analysis and combination of the simplest elements. This, says M. Comte, is the moral transition of every educated mind; and this, he also says, is the microcosm of the progressive social world of the last six thousand years. We deny the fact; we deny that the annals of science will furnish any induction large enough to support so sweeping a proposition. The positive tendencies of the last century and a half have indeed marred half their inherent virtue, by extending their sensuous philosophy to subjects to which its founders never intended it to apply. For positivism itself is not a finality, but only a transition. Or, if a permanent state, then is it one still more lamentably imperfect than either of its introductory phases. Youth may sober from generosity to prudence, and from prudence to senile avarice. But who shall dare to call that last state more perfect than the first? The perfect man is he who grafts new experiences on old sentiments and convictions; and so society will be no doubtful loser if, in the progress of principles, it can only purchase material advancement by the sacrifice of spiritual beliefs.

We turn willingly from these fundamental theories of Comte, where we can hardly censure too strongly, to others which we can praise conscientiously. In fact, if the reader has only moral strength and charity enough to treat the unpositive portions of this work as extraneous eccentricities, which they really are, he will find the whole book, and the latter part in particular, well worthy of the speculation of a leisure hour. The subordination of the sciences to each other, and their intrinsic unity, is a striking idea, which is well worked out. The connection of inorganic and organic physics is ingeniously traced; as is also the progressive history of matter from the lowest primitive inertia, up to the highest and most stirring sphere of life. But when animal existence is reached, and the familiar theory of development carried to its fullest extent, Mr. Lewes finds himself obliged to apologise for his author, who, with the aid of Biology alone, pushes on at once to the climax of his doctrines—Sociology. But Gall and Spurzheim are required, in the opinion of Mr. Lewes, to furnish physiological data for reconstructing society. And so we come to the last part of the work, which draws a very fair picture of the antagonistic dynamics of the day, and the absorption of the old philosophies in the industrial element.

The rightful subordination of labour to employment is asserted; and it seems to be admitted that the great capitalists must and ought to be

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the influential and governing classes of a country. This position is a legitimate deduction from positivism, but it is also, we think, not the weakest argument of its fallacy as a totality. And so the commentary of Mr. Lewes ends with a chapter which discards Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, as having had their day; and yet which, finding it necessary, after destroying existing superstitions, to set up something in their place, proposes to us an unintelligible something which he calls, not a religion of Reason—no, there are disagreeable revolutionary reminiscences of that—but a religion of humanity, the worship of a Collective Life, which is called an *Être Suprême*. Thus it always is; and thus after all, according to the old maxim, these gentlemen must end by inventing the Creator whom they start with denying.

Let us add this one word. If we really want a new philosophy, let it be one of fusion—not, like this, one of extinction and experimental construction. Theology, Metaphysics, and Positivism, are distinct but real and amalgamable entities. Strange that we cannot reverence and cultivate all. At present Positivism has tainted our philosophy as much as philosophy had previously tainted our theology. We have fallen from Scylla to Charybdis—from Aristotle to Bacon, as before we fell from God to Aristotle. There is a reaction even now going on; and we believe the time is not far distant when this unnatural disunion will cease, and these three constituent elements of science will return from their hitherto prismatic state of separation into their normal unity. The joint action of soul, mind, and body make man; that of goodness, omniscience, and matter, the universe. For the rest, the book is a clever one, with much good matter and some bad logic. We cannot, indeed, think it with Mr. Lewes to be the philosophy; for, wanting the religion of a heart, and the abstract intellect of a soul—resting itself, as it also does, proudly and exclusively, on a theory of purely organic sensation and sympathy—we believe it to be a tottering superstructure without a foundation. It will have its day perhaps; although it is said to have lost weight already in France. But so far as man lives by bread alone, and so far as physiology, cerebral phrenology and experimental anatomy may be considered important parts, as they are unquestionably, of personal and political economy—so far we are disposed to give a qualified, though not a hearty welcome to such a book as this.

### SCIENCE.

*The Microscope, in its special Application to Vegetable Anatomy and Physiology.* By Dr. HERMANN SCHACHT. Translated by FREDERICK CURREY, Esq., M.A. Samuel Highley, Fleet-street.

POPULAR writers on scientific subjects are apt to affect antithesis. When we take up a work on steam-navigation, we are usually doomed to wade through a dissertation on the British coracle, a treatise on the ship *Argo*, or at least a pen-and-ink sketch of the *Great Harry*. Would we learn something of the Electric Telegraph, Lunar Astronomy, or any subject involving natural science, and seek information from a popular book, it is certain we must read or skip much preliminary history or description, which, save by way of contrast, has nothing whatever to do with the matter in hand. Dr. Schacht sins in this respect like his fellows, initiating a treatise on the use of the microscope with "the starry heavens," "illimitable space," &c. &c. We cannot comprehend the necessity nor the reasonableness of such exordiums being set in the gateway like legendary monsters; they are mere nuisances to the student, and are, to our notions, altogether out of place. We feel we should render to this class of literature a similar service to that of the young Hospitaller who slew the Rhodian dragon, could our protest on this point free the highways of science from this pest, and thus permit the pilgrim to any special shrine, to pursue his way unmolested by the merits of others being dinned into his ears. We are bound, however, to say that our protest is rather general than special, since this worthy German botanist, or rather his translator, occupies himself exclusively in the second and subsequent chapters, with the microscope, and the declared subject-matter of his book.

The very perfection of the microscopes of the present day but increases the liability of the observer to mistakes; for, as our author justly insists,

*Seeing, as Schleiden very judiciously observes, is a difficult art; seeing with the microscope is yet more difficult, as it deprives our eyes of all assistance from the surrounding unmagnified objects, and thereby renders any comparison with them impossible. . . . In microscopic observations two things must be remembered:—1st. That in the microscope, especially with high powers, we see surfaces, not bodies. . . . 2nd. That we seldom see objects under the microscope in their natural condition.*

He further points to the necessity of study, and the systematic training of the eye and hand in the use of the microscope, as in the acquirement of any other art, in order to form a good and trustworthy observer. We may employ this instrument well and wisely for the amusement both of ourselves and others, yet, if we would really use it, long and thorough practice and a systematic method of investigation is indispensable, since "work without method will seldom lead to any result."

Of the origin of the microscope we know but little; indeed, in its simplest form, we may regard it as coeval with the use of lenses, with which we have good reason to suppose the Assyrians were acquainted, a nation apparently not gifted with invention, although skilful in its application; so that were we to ascribe the discovery of the optical properties of glass and crystal to the "cradle of the arts," the conjecture rests on grounds which may yet receive confirmation from the researches of those who devote themselves with so much skill and energy to the discovery and interpretation of the most interesting of all the remains of remote antiquity, the Egyptian. A pair of spectacles is the simplest form of the microscope, enabling the eye, without confusing the vision, to approach more nearly to the object to be seen. A "magnifying glass" is an adaptation of the same principle, carried to a further extent; and the most perfect form of the simple microscope in no wise differs in principle from a pair of spectacles or common magnifying glass. The improvements in the microscope, which have placed in the hands of the skilful observer an instrument wherewith he may pursue nature to her most hidden recesses, are comparatively of recent date. Amongst those to whom this progress is due, our English opticians and men of science stand pre-eminent. Wollaston, Holland, Varley, Pritchard, Lister, Brewster, Airy, Ramsden, Ross, and others, have contributed, each in his special department, to bring the English microscope to its present high degree of excellence; which, ensuring, with proper care, accuracy of vision, has placed in the hands of men devoted to any special natural science a means of extending their observations and knowledge in ever-widening and seemingly limitless circles, and indeed has given rise to a new division of scientific research, that of Histology.

Whether we view it as a matter of utility or of beauty, the adaptation of polarising apparatus to this instrument was a most happy invention; conferring upon it additional value as a philosophical instrument and analyser. The gorgeousness of colour, inimitable by art, which polarized light lends to so many objects, must have served as an additional charm to lure men to the simple and captivating pursuit of microscopic research, and won them to an admiration and awe of the beauties and wonders of the minute things of the world, before unknown and unfelt. In connection with this application of polarised light to the microscope, we were glad to see a suggestion by Dr. Herapath of replacing the tourmaline, a stone difficult to obtain fit for the purpose, and consequently expensive when good, by crystals artificially formed and consisting mainly of iodine and quinine, which possess this polarising power in perfection. This, one of the most recent, promises to prove a valuable adaptation to the microscope; but it were vain to attempt even to jot down the names of the inventors and discoverers, who now, from day to day, improve and put to such good use one of the most ingenious and important instruments ever constructed by the ingenuity and sagacity of man.

From this, the first number of *Highley's Library of Science and Art*, we augur well of the series; the present work being that of a man whose mind is saturated with his subject, and who here lays before his readers the knowledge acquired by patient, systematic, and laborious investigation. We notice with special approbation the entire absence of what in this age of slang is termed "clap-trap." Our author proceeds steadily with his work; he shows you what to observe and how to observe, inculcates the necessity of method

and practice, and does all this quietly and unostentatiously, without calling on the reader to hold up his hand in an ecstasy, or lose his wits with wonder—a style we like. We have not the original, but, so far as we can judge of this epitomised translation, have no reason to regret its absence. A book of this kind is not meant to be read inattentively, carelessly. Science is too jealous a mistress thus to be slighted; but we have not met with a sentence of Mr. Curry's which can present the least difficulty to the student, nor indeed to the general reader, excepting the technical terms, which, by the way, must be mastered by him who would acquire any given science whatever. The work is not of a nature to admit of an extract to satisfy our readers with our judgment in this matter, without encroaching too much on our space; but by those interested in the science, rather than the mere nomenclature of Botany, we think a crown will not be badly spent in the purchase of this useful manual for the microscopical examination of vegetable structures.

A SHORT essay on the *Chemistry of Dyeing* has been published by Mr. GEO. WRIGHT. He explains the process on the theory of elective affinity.—*The Astronomical Annual for 1854* is what it is called, an almanack devoted to astronomy. It treats of the expected return of the great comet of 1556.—Mr. R. MEARS has published some decimal coinage tables, which will be very useful when that reform in our coinage is carried—but when?

### HISTORY.

*The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China, and the situation thereof.* Compiled by the Padre JUAN GONZALEZ DE MENDOZA, and now reprinted from the early Translation of R. Parke. Edited by Sir GEORGE T. STAUNTON, Bart. With an Introduction, by R. H. MAJOR, Esq., of the British Museum, Honorary Secretary of the Hakluyt Society. London. 1853.

THE greatest of all puzzles is the Chinese puzzle. Not the complication of rings and rods that bothers the school-boy—nor ivory sphere within ivory sphere, which taxes the constructive powers of European mechanics to imitate—but the Chinese people themselves. Historically and ethnologically, it is difficult to know what to make of them. It would really be a great convenience if we could resolve the whole empire of Celestials into a myth. We know too much of them, and we know too little. They are, and they are not. They have been, and they have not been. China has been peopled since the flood, and it has not been peopled sooner than the seventh or eighth century before Christ. China was an Assyrian colony, and an Egyptian colony. It was Japhetic in its origin, and it was Semitic. It had its arts from Egypt, and it lent its arts to Egypt. Moses, according to Professor Hermann, of Strasburg, knew all about the manufacture of gunpowder, which he had learned of the priests of Egypt; and from Egypt the "villanous" manufacture was carried to the land of Cathay. China had its mythology from Greece, and the Grecians borrowed their mythology from the Chinese. They adore God, and they have no word even for God. They had clocks in the ninth century, and were astonished at the sight of Father Ricci's clock in the sixteenth. They were eminent astronomers, and yet were such bunglers that they had Mohammedans to attend to their observatories, and to calculate their almanacs, for several centuries. Their chronology harmonises with the chronology of Moses, and it does not harmonise with the chronology of Moses. They worshipped the cross before the cross was erected on Calvary, and they despised the cross when it was preached to them. They knew the books of the Old Testament before they were very well known in England or France; and they knew nothing about these books until the appearance of Milne and Morrison's translation in the present century. The list of contradictions could as easily be multiplied, as chapter and verse can be given, indorsed by high names, for every contradiction that has been above stated. The Chinese have been, in short, shuttlecocks for philosophical battledores.

But the greatest puzzle of China, after all, is the facts of China. The Chinese were an ingenious, lying, cheating, learned people ten centuries ago; and they are so still—not a whit more ingenious, not a lie more mendacious, not a cash more dishonest, not a letter more learned. What they were, they are. All the world has marched

on to right or left during this period. China alone has stood still—eating rice, exposing small babies, swallowing swords, producing scholars, and, respectfully be it spoken, practising “artful dodges,” just as under the dynasty of Han, or when Confucius sat down to a cup of “aesthetic tea” and controversy with the profound Lao-tze, whose mother gave him to the world after seventy years’ gestation, and he appeared a hoary-headed baby. For which reason it is almost immaterial what book upon China one takes up to read. The most ancient book tells as much about this singular people as the most recent book, and all the better because ancient writers were not afflicted with modern prejudices. Renaudot’s two Mohammedan travellers, Carpini, Rubruquis and Marco Polo are, jointly and severally, quite as much to the point as Staunton, Davis, Gutzlaff, Huc, or Callery. Mendoza, whom we have here before us, by favour of the Hakluyt Society, may be taken as a guide to China and the Chinese as safely as the most modern writer; because Mendoza had a good eye to perceive, and a clever hand to detail what he saw, and because the China of the nineteenth century is twin brother to China of the sixteenth, so alike are they in stature, feature, and complexion. Indeed, Mr. Major’s introduction tells as much about China, from ancient writers, in eighty pages, as any modern work can tell in almost ten times the space.

China had no historical beginning, no development, no growth. It came into the world with all its teeth in its head, ready to masticate from rice upwards to the unicorn, whose flesh is a dainty. It had no boyhood as a nation, but became all at once a stunted man; and such it has continued, still preserving its teeth, and having small need of a barber. We have never read of Chinese epics or bucolics; but we are assured that before Homer lost his sight, and took to ballad-singing—before Sappho vindicated, practically, the right of woman to publish—before dainty Horace wrote odes and had lamprey suppers with Mæcenas—China had its writers, its men of letters, its naturalists and historians. Before Bavaria had its beer, China had its tea. Before the German had his blanket, the Chinaman had his robe of silk. When Kelt was proud of his wooden fibulae, and plaited his hair to keep it tidy, there were gentlemen in Nanking, and cits in Canfu, who fastened their robes with brooches of amber, and who made wholesome use of combs of ivory. Long before Ragnar, the Norse Viking, was surnamed, on account of his continuations, Lodbrog, or, in plain English, Leather-breeches, the Chinese dandy went a wooing in silken pantaloon. When Alfred, or the venerable Bede, was scrawling tediously on rough paper of a night, guided by faint light from horn lantern, the Chinaman had his printing-press, and the Chinese devil rolled the forms in the glare of wax-light. Yang-tse wrote on currency, ore Cobbett’s triple-grandsire was mooted in the way of human generation; “paper against gold” was the rule, before the Irish had got rid of their ring money; and book-keeping was a science when Falstaff’s score was registered in chalk at the Boar of Eastcheap, and the Exchequer accounts were kept with wooden tallies. Squibs, crackers, and Roman candles were “let off” in Nanking, before western scholars began to wrangle about the Greek fire and what it was not, and before small boys made annual bonfires and plagued their seniors by fastening juvenile bombshells to their skirts in honour of Guido Fawkes. Europe, to speak paradoxically and yet truly, was ten centuries behind China, and is yet twelve centuries before it.

Seriously, it is really astonishing—when we consider the amount of progress that the Chinese had made in the arts of civilisation, before Europe had emerged from her fens and forests,—how stationary they have been ever since. Science, art, learning, and literature are all just as they were ages ago—neither better nor worse. And the Chinese character is the same also. The Chinaman is still a money-making animal—prudent, industrious, economical—contented with a handful of rice for his day’s labour; and happier than a mandarin with a red button if he can get but a cup of arrack or a whiff of contraband poppy-juice. The abuse of opium, indeed, is the only sign of progress he has displayed of late years. We say progress, in this instance; and it may seem sinful to connect progress with the manifestation of a vice; but there is really more hope of a sinner than of a negative saint. There is hope of repentance in the one case; in the other case none. The Chinaman is still timid;

and still cruel. He is still crafty and indirect; and never so much in his element as when he is mystifying or bamboozling his neighbour. He is withal a merry rogue—jokes in his greatest tribulation, and never dies of a broken heart.

But here we hold, to give a few samples of the present work, which may be had, perhaps, for love, but, as far as we know, not for money, being limited in its circulation to the elected of the Hakluyt Society, whose members pay a guinea *per annum*—having, in return for this expenditure, one or two volumes annually of ancient voyages and travels, well “got up,” and, generally speaking, carefully edited. Their chief fault is that they are too carefully edited, and incumbered with heaps of bibliographical rubbish, useful perhaps to the book-collector, but which every sensible reader passes over. This remark does not apply so much to the present as to some previous publications of the society. Mr. Major’s introduction is, indeed, highly interesting, and is all that can be desired in an introduction, and indicates the sources of information on China to him who would read more of that country.

Parke translated Mendoza’s work from the Spanish at the suggestion of Hakluyt himself. It was published in London in 1588, and is now a scarce book. The title-page itself is worth transcribing, smacking, as it does, of the verbal precision of our ancestors in setting forth their books. “The Historie of the great and mightie Kingdome of China, and the situation thereof: Together with the great riches, huge citties, politike gouernement, and rare inuentions in the same.” And then, after a dedication by the translator “To the right worshipfull and famous gentleman, M. Thomas Candlish, Esquire, increase of honor and happie attempts,” the “historie” begins. Before speaking of the Chinese, the author gives some account of their neighbours, and, among others, of

#### THE TARTARS.

These Tartarians haue had many times wars with them of China: but at one time (as you shall perceiue) they got the whole kingdome of China, and did possesse the same for the space of ninety-three yeares, till such time as they of China did rebell and forced them out againe. At this day they say that they are friends one with another, and that is, for that they bee all Gentiles, and do vse all one manner of ceremonies and rites. They doo differ in their clenes and lawes, in the which the Chinas doth exceede them very much. The Tartarians are very yellow and not so white: and they go naked from the girdlest upwards, and they eate raw flesh, and do annoint themselves with the blood of raw flesh, for to make them more harder and currish, by reason whereof they doo so stinke, that if the aire doth come from that part where they be, you shall smel them afar off by the strong sauer.

The author describes the great industry of the Chinese, and tells us something which we could wish were the fact nearer home: “In all this mightie countrie they do not suffer vacabunds nor idle people, but all such (ouer and aboue that they are greuouslie punished) they are holden for infamous”—and very proper too. Let us introduce the reader to the

#### CHINESE LADIES.

They that be not married doo differ from them that be married, in that they doo kirie their haire on their foreheade, and wear higher hotties. Their women do appaill themselves verie curiously, much after the fashion of Spaine: they vse many jewells of gold and precious stones: their gownes haue wide aleceues; that wherewith they do appaill themselves is of cloath of gold and siluer and diuers sortes of silkes, whereof they haue great plentie, as aforesaid, and excellent good, and good cheape: and the poore folkes doo appaill themselves with veluet, ynshorne veluet and serge. They haue verie faire haire, and doo combe it with great care and diligence, as do the women of Genouay, and do binde it about their heade with a broad silke lace, set full of pearles and precious stones, and they say it doth become them verie well: they doo vse to paint themselves, and in some place in excesse. Amongst them they account it for gentilitie and a gallant thing to haue little feete, and therefore from their youth they so swaddell and binde them verie straight, and do suffer it with patience; for that she who hath the least feete is accounted the gallantest dame. They say that the men hath induced them vnto this custome, for to binde their feete so harde, that almost they doo loose the forme of them, and remaine halfe lame, so that their going is verie ill, and with great trauell: which is the occasion that they goe but little abroad, and fewe times doo rise vp from their worke that they do; and was inuented onely for the same intent. This custome hath indured manie yeares, and will indure many more, for that it is established for a law: and that woman which doth breake it, and not vse it with her children, shalbe counted as euill, yea shalbe punished for the same.

They are very secrete and honest, in such sort that you shall not see at any time a woman at her window nor at her doores: and if her husband doo inuite any person to dinner, she is neuer seene, nor eateth not at the table, except the guest be a kinsman, or a very friende: when they goe abroad to visite their father, mother, or any other kinsfolkes, they are carried in a little chaire by foure men, the which is made close, and with lattises rounde about made of golde wyre and with siluer, and curtienes of silke; that although they doo see them that be in the streete, yet they cannot be seene.

There is nothing new in the following marginal reading, but the proof of it may be new:—

#### THE DUELLE TELLETH LIES.

The order that they haue in innocuacion or calling on the diuell, is as followeth. They cause a man to lie vpon the ground, his face downwards, then another beginneth to reade vpon a booke singing, and part of them that are present doo answere vnto him, the rest do make a sound with little bells and tabers; then within a little while after, the man that lieth on the ground beginneth to make visages and iestures, which is a certaine token that the diuell is entered within him: then do they aske of him what they doo desire to know; then he that is possessed doth answere, yet for the most part they bee lies that hee doth speake; although hee doo keepe it close, yet doth hee giue diuers reasons vnto that which hee dooth answere, for that alwayes they doo answere either by wordes or by letters, which is the remedie they haue when that the diuell will not answere by wordes. And when that he doth answere by letters, then do they spread a redde mantle or couerlet vpon the ground, and throw thereon a certaine quantitie of rice, dispersed equally in euery place vpon the couerlet; then do they cause a man that cannot write to stand there with a stick in his hand; then those that are present do begin to sing and to make a sounde as at the first innocuacion, and within a little while the diuell doth enter into him that hath the stick, and causeth him to write vpon the rice, then do they translate the letters that are there formed with the stick, and being loyned altogether, they finde answere of that they doo demaunde; although for the most part it falleth out as aforesaid, as vnto people that do communicate with the father of all lying, and so do their answere fall out false and full of leasings. If that at any time he do tell them the truth, it is not for that he dooth it by nature or with his will, but to induce them vnder the colour of a truth to perseure in their errors, and they do giue credite vnto a thousand lies: in this sort doo they innocuate the diuell, and it is so ordinarie a thing throughout all the kingdome, that there is nothing more vned nor knowne.

These extracts will give a fair idea of Mendoza’s matter and his translator’s manner. The volume is highly interesting, but we are not bound to put faith in every word the writer tells us, or we should have to believe some things rather strange. The editorial work is well done. Notes are supplied to help the unlearned over Elizabethan orthographies. We cannot help thinking that a reprint of Parke’s translation, slightly modernised, and sold at a reasonable price, would be a good bookselling speculation.

#### VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

*A Lady’s Visit to the Gold Diggings of Australia, in 1852-53. Written on the spot. By Mrs. CHARLES CLACY. London: Hurst & Blackett. Records of a Run through Continental Countries, embracing Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Savoy, and France. By JAMES GRANT. In 2 vols. London: Routledge.*

*Rambles in Java and the Straits, in 1852. By a BENGAL CIVILIAN. London: Simpkin and Co. We have had countless descriptions of “the Diggings” of Australia in books, in magazines, in newspapers; but all have been the composition of men. Few ladies have ventured into the gold regions—at least, few ladies sufficiently refined and accomplished to write a book—for a place that has been described as a human Pandemonium is not one to which a considerate man would choose to take a woman he loved, or whither a woman who respected herself would go of her own accord. Mrs. Charles Clacy was an involuntary visitor; she left England with her brother in 1852. Arrived at Victoria, a mercantile speculation offered advantages which he could not decline. The courageous lady preferred to accompany her brother in an expedition to the gold regions rather than remain alone at Victoria. A party was formed, an escort hired, and, with merchandise and provisions, they set forth. They visited the mines and, having disposed of their stock to great advantage, the brother and his friends tried their hands at digging, but with indifferent success. After a variety*



of adventures, related in a very pleasant and unaffected manner, they returned to Victoria; and the lady, having won a husband by her bravery, in the following year came back again to England, and now gives to the world the benefit of her experience.

And the value of this contribution to our knowledge of the wondrous new world, now being peopled in the Southern Ocean, consists in its being the production of a lady. Women have much keener perceptions than we can boast, and they notice small things, which a man would have passed by as trivial, but which are as necessary as greater things to a correct understanding of the state of a society under conditions so novel as that which exists in the gold regions. From Mrs. Clacy we gather a great deal of information not to be found elsewhere, much of it of great value to intending emigrants; and we would recommend her book to be read attentively by those who are about to visit Australia, as well as by those who have friends there. It will give them a more accurate notion of the country and the people than they would obtain from any other source with which we are acquainted.

She notices the unmannerly—we should term it the unmanly—conduct of the people.

#### BAD MANNERS.

You may see, and hear too, some thoroughly colonial scenes in the streets. Once, in the middle of the day, when passing up Elizabeth-street, I heard the unmistakable sound of a mob behind; and as it was gaining upon me, I turned into the inclosed ground in front of the Roman Catholic cathedral, to keep out of the way of the crowd. A man had been taken up for horse-stealing, and a rare raffish set of both sexes were following the prisoner and the two policemen who had him in charge. "If but six of ye were of my mind," shouted one, "it's this moment you'd release him." The crowd took the hint, and to it they set with right good will, yelling, swearing and pushing with awful violence. The owner of the stolen horse got up a counter-demonstration, and every few yards the procession was delayed by a trial of strength between the two parties. Ultimately the police conquered; but this is not always the case, and often lives are lost and limbs broken in the struggle, so weak is the force maintained by the Colonial Government for the preservation of order. Another day, when passing the post-office, a regular tropical shower of rain came on rather suddenly, and I hastened up to the platform for shelter. As I stood there, looking out into Great Bourke-street, a man, and, I suppose, his wife, passed by. He had a letter in his hand for the post; but as the pathway to the receiving-box looked very muddy, he made his companion take it to the box, whilst he himself, from beneath his umbrella, complacently watched her getting wet through. "Colonial politeness," thought I, as the happy couple walked on. Sometimes a jovial wedding party comes dashing through the streets: there they go, the bridegroom with one arm round his lady's waist, the other raising a champagne bottle to his lips; the gay vehicles that follow contain company even more unrestrained, and from them noisier demonstrations of merriment may be heard. These diggers' weddings are all the rage; and bridal veils, white kid gloves, and, above all, orange blossoms, are generally most difficult to procure at any price.

Travelling was agreeable and exciting. Occasionally some picturesque scenes were presented, as this of

#### AN ENCAMPMENT.

As we advanced, the thickly-wooded sides of Mount Macedon became more distinct, and our proximity to a part of the country which we knew to be auriferous, exercised an unaccountable yet pleasurable influence over our spirits, which was perhaps increased by the loveliness of the spot where we now pitched our tents for the evening. It was at the foot of the gap. The stately gum-tree, the shea-oak, with its gracefully drooping foliage, the perfumed yellow blossom of the mimosa, the richly-wooded mountain in the background, united to form a picture too magnificent to describe. The ground was carpeted with wild flowers; the sarsaparilla blossoms creeping everywhere; before us slowly rippled a clear streamlet, reflecting a thousand times the deepening tints which the last rays of the setting sun flung over the surrounding scenery; the air rang with the cawing of the numerous cockatoos and parrots of all hues and colours, who made the woods resound with their tones, whilst their restless movements and gay plumage gave life and piquancy to the scene. This night our beds were composed of the mimosa, which has a perfume like the hawthorn. The softest-looking branches were selected, cut down, and flung upon the ground beneath the tents, and formed a bed which, to my wearied limbs, appeared the softest and most luxurious upon which I had slept since my arrival in the colonies.

But what a change from the calm and holy beauty of nature to the spot where all bad human

passions were seething, making earth a hell. We take some

#### SCENES AT THE DIGGINGS.

But night at the diggings is the characteristic time: murder here—murder there—revolvers cracking—blunderbusses bombing—rifles going off—balls whistling—one man groaning with a broken leg—another shouting because he could find the way to his hole, and a third equally vociferous because he has tumbled into one—this man swearing—another praying—a party of bacchanals chanting various ditties to different time and tune, or rather minus both. Here is one man grumbling because he has brought his wife with him, another ditto because he has left his behind, or sold her for an ounce of gold or a bottle of rum. Donnybrook Fair is not to be compared to an evening at Bendigo.

#### Again.

The stores at the diggings are large tents, generally square or oblong, and every thing required by a digger can be obtained for money, from sugar-candy to potted anchovies; from East India pickles to Bass's pale ale; from ankle-jack boots to a pair of stays; from a baby's cap to a cradle; and every apparatus for mining, from a pick to a needle. But the confusion—the din—the medley—what a scene for a shop-walker! Here lies a pair of herrings dripping into a bag of sugar, or a box of raisins; there a gay-looking bundle of ribbons beneath two tumblers, and a half-finished bottle of ale. Cheese and butter, bread and yellow soap, pork and currants, saddles and frocks, wide-awakes and blue serge shirts, green veils and shovels, baby linen and tallow candles, are all heaped indiscriminately together; added to which, there are children bawling, men swearing, store-keeper sulky, and last, not least, women's tongues going nineteen to the dozen.

Here is an incident in a digger's life.

#### A LUCKY FIND.

Saturday, October 2.—This day found the four hard at work at an early hour, and words will not describe our delight when they hit upon a "pocket" full of the precious metal. The "pocket" was situated in a dark corner of the hole, and William was the one whose fossicking-knife first brought its hidden beauties to light. Nugget after nugget did that dirty soil give up; by evening they had taken out five pounds' weight of gold. As the next day was the sabbath, thirty-six hours of suspense must elapse before we could know whether this was but a passing kindness from the fickle goddess, or the herald of continued good fortune. This night, for the first time, we were really in dread of an attack, though we had kept our success quite secret, not even mentioning it to our superstitious; nor did we intend to do so until Monday morning, when our first business would be to mark out three more claims round the lucky spot, and send our gold down to the escort-office for security. For the present we were obliged to content ourselves with "planting" it—that is, burying it in the ground; and not a footstep passed in our neighbourhood without our imagining ourselves robbed of the precious treasure; and as it was Saturday night—the noisiest and most riotous at the diggings—our panics were neither few nor far between. So true it is that riches entail trouble and anxiety on their possessor.

These were among her first experiences of

#### MELBOURNE LIFE.

Meanwhile, we were getting initiated into colonial prices—money did indeed take to itself wings and fly away. Fire-arms were at a premium: one instance will suffice—my brother sold a six-barrelled revolver for which he had given sixty shillings at Baker's in Fleet-street, for sixteen pounds, and the parting with it at that price was looked upon as a great favour. Imagine boots, and they very second-rate ones, at four pounds a pair. One of our between-deck passengers who had speculated with a small capital of forty pounds in boots and cutlery, told me afterwards that he had disposed of them the same evening he had landed, at a net profit of ninety pounds—no trifling addition to a poor man's purse. Labour was at a very high price; carpenters, boot and shoe makers, tailors, wheelwrights, joiners, smiths, glaziers, and in fact all useful trades, were earning from twenty to thirty shillings a day—the very men working on the roads could get eleven shillings per diem; and many a gentleman in this disarranged state of affairs was glad to fling old habits aside and turn his hand to whatever came readiest. I knew one in particular, whose brother is at this moment serving as colonel in the army in India, a man more fitted for a gay London life than a residence in the colonies. The diggings were too dirty and uncivilised for his taste; his capital was quickly dwindling away beneath the expenses of the comfortable life he led at one of the best hotels in town; so he turned to what as a boy he had learnt for amusement, and obtained an addition to his income of more than four hundred pounds a year, as house-carpenter. In the morning you might see him trudging off to his work, and before night meet him at some ball or soiree among the élite of Melbourne.

Now for a sketch of

#### THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE.

Wild flowers there are in abundance, and some ex-

quisite specimens of ferns. The geranium, fuchsia, rhododendrum, and almost all varieties of the cacti, have been taken to the colonies, and flourish well in the open air all the year round, growing much more luxuriantly than in England. The vineyards must some day form a considerable source of employment and profit to the colonists. The wine made in Australia is very good. The vines are cultivated in the same manner as in France. In the neighbourhood of Sydney, oranges and peaches are grown out in the open air. Apples and other fruits flourish well in Van Diemen's Land. All these fruits are not indigenous to Australia. The only articles of food natural there are the kangaroos, emus, opossums, and other denizens of the forest, a few snakes, some roots, and a worm, about the length and thickness of a finger, which is abundant in all parts of the colony, and is taken out of the cavities, or from under the bark, of the trees. It is a great favourite with the blacks, as it can be procured when no other food is attainable. I have before made mention of the bush and scrub; there is a great dissimilarity between the two. The former resembles a forest, with none or very little underwood. The scrub on the contrary is always underwood, of from six to twenty feet high, and only here and there a few trees are seen. To be lost in either bush or scrub is a common thing.

We conclude with the most minute account we have seen of the

#### NATURAL HISTORY OF MELBOURNE.

Eels are very plentiful in Victoria, and are peculiar to this district, being seldom, if ever, found in any other part of the known continent. Old writers on Australia have stated that eels are unknown in this part of the world, which, since this colony has been settled in, has been found to be erroneous, as the Barwin, the Yarra Yarra, and their tributaries, abound with them, some weighing five or six pounds. A few days after our return from the diggings, we breakfasted off a dish of stewed eels, caught by a friend; the smallest weighed about a pound and a half, the largest about three pounds. They were caught three miles from Melbourne, in the Salt Water Creek. A small kind of fish like the lamprey, another similar to the gudgeon, and also one (of rather a larger kind—the size of the roach) called here "white herrings," but not at all resembling that fish, are found. Pike are also very numerous. Crabs and lobsters are not known here, but in the salt creeks near the sea we have crawfish. Of course, parrots, cockatoos, and "sich-like," abound in the bush, to the horror of the small gardeners and cultivators, as what they do not eat they ruin by destroying the young shoots. Kangaroos are extremely numerous in the scrub. They are the size of a large greyhound, and of a mouse colour. The natives call them "kanguru." The tail is of great strength. There are several varieties of them. The largest is the Great Kangaroo, of a greyish-brown colour, generally four or five feet high, and the tail three. Some kangaroos are nearly white, others resemble the hare in colour. Pugs, or young kangaroos, are plentiful about the marshy grounds; so are also the opossum and kangaroo rat. The latter is not a rat, properly speaking, but approaches the squirrel tribe. It is a filipitian kangaroo, the size of our native wood-squirrel, and larger, only grey or reddish-grey. It can leap six or eight feet easily, and is excellent eating. The native dog is of all colours; it has the head and brush of a fox, with the body and legs of a dog. It is a cowardly animal, and will run away from you like mad. It is a great enemy of the kangaroo rat, and a torment to the squatter, for a native dog has a great penchant for mutton, and will kill thirty or forty sheep in the course of an hour. A species of mocking-bird which inhabits the bush is a ludicrous creature. It imitates everything, and makes many a camping party imagine there is a man near them, when they hear its whistle or hearty laugh. This bird is nicknamed the "Jackass," and its loud "ha! ha! ha!" is heard every morning at dawn echoing through the woods, and serving the purpose of a "boots," by calling the sleepy traveller in good time to get his breakfast and pursue his journey. The bats here are very large. Insects, fleas, &c. are as plentiful as it is possible to be, and the ants, of which there are several kinds, are a perfect nuisance. The largest are called by the old colonists "bull-dogs," and formidable creatures they are—luckily not very common—about an inch and a half long, black, or rusty-black, with a red tail. They bite like a little crab. Ants of an inch long are quite common. They do not—like the English ones—run scared away at the sight of a human being—not a bit of it; Australian ants have more pluck, and will turn and face you. Nay, more, should you retreat, they will run after you with all the impudence imaginable. Often when my organ of destructiveness has tempted me slightly to disturb with the end of my parasol one of the many ant-hills on the way from Melbourne to Richmond, I have been obliged, as soon as they discovered the perpetrator of the attack, to take to my heels and run away as if for my life. Centipedes and triantopoles (colonial, for tarantula) are very common, and though not exactly fatal, are very dangerous if not attended to. The deaf adder is the most formidable "varmint" in Australia. There are two varieties; it is generally about two feet

long. The bite is fatal. The deaf adder never moves unless it is touched; hence its name. I do not think it has the power of twisting or twirling like the ordinary snake or adder, and it is very slow in its movements. There are several species of snakes; some of them are extremely venomous, and grow to a large size, as long as ten feet. The black snake is the most venomous of any; its bite is fatal within a few hours. (To be continued.)

## FICTION.

### THE NEW NOVELS.

*The Twin Sisters*: a Novel. By LUCY FIELD, Author of "The Two Friends." London: J. Chapman.

*Oakfield; or, Fellowship in the East*. By PUN-JABEE. In 2 vols. London: Longmans.

*The Roses*. By the Author of "The History of a Flirt" &c. In 3 vols. London: Hurst and Blackett.

*Confidence*: a Tale. By ELIZABETH AMELIA GEE. In 3 vols. London: Saunders and Otley.

THE approach of winter; the return to home of those who had taken their periodical flights in the autumn to distant lands; the revival of life in London; the long evenings; the growing cold; the interregnum of drawing-room gaiety during the month of fog—are welcomed by publishers as the season, beyond all others, adapted for the production of novels; for it is undoubtedly the novel-reading season. More fiction is devoured during the month of November than in any other two months of the year.

But the present season has not brought with it the wonted crop of new novels. They used to crowd our table at this period of the year: now they are few, and of no mark. Can the war have occasioned this, or the state of the money-market; or are the publishers perplexed by Mr. Bentley's announcement that he will reduce the price of novels by two-thirds, let the consequences be what they may? Is it that they wait to see the result of his experiment; or that they doubt whether it would be most prudent to follow the example, or adhere to the old scale? The experiment is a bold one; but we do not believe it can succeed, except at the expense of the author. At the reduced price, the author cannot be so well rewarded as before, without a trebled circulation. But even the reduced price is not low enough to tempt individual purchasers; and the circulating libraries who did not buy before because of the cost, and who will buy now, are not sufficiently numerous to make a trebled sale.

Miss Field's *Twin Sisters* is characterised by good writing. There is no invention in the plot—no genius in production of character. It betrays considerable ignorance of the "wide wide world," combined with an accurate knowledge of the little world within which a lady's experience is circled; hence it is that, when depicting quiet home scenes, nothing can be more truthful than her descriptions; when she attempts to paint persons and incidents beyond her own sphere, nothing can be more unreal and untruthful. To do her justice, however, it should be stated that she appears to be thoroughly aware of her strength and of her weakness; and therefore she has chosen for her theme the narrowest sphere within which a novel could be constructed; and, so long as she keeps within it, she is thoroughly natural. But then that virtue is bought at some sacrifice of spirit. The domestic drama is tame, and the dialogues are commonplace—just, indeed, as dialogues always are in life under such dull circumstances.

Miss Field has a moral. She seeks to exalt the virtues of industry and good temper by contrasting them, in the person of Amy Courtney, with pride and passion in Inez (that eternal Inez—why do not novelists use another name?) This young lady not only falls in love with a gentleman (young ladies cannot always help that), but after the object of her passion is married to another, she continues to cherish her passion, and in a fit of despair makes a match which gives her splendour and a title, but is attended with every form of domestic misery. Amy, less impetuous, less ambitious, having more self-command, is in her turn made the sport of the vacillating love of a weak man, whom she had loved from her girlhood. But she has power over herself, and when she finds him false, she tears herself from the dream, and ultimately marries a worthy youth who loves rationally, and promises to become a good husband.

Such a story is nothing in itself. The entire interest lies in the narrative, and the incidents and personages thus strung together. Many of the latter, indeed, are amusing people enough, manifestly drawn from real flesh and blood. Miss Field must have a keen eye for her acquaintances; she gives them at full length here, with a graphic power which seems to vouch for the accuracy of the picture.

Miss Field most needs the enlargement of her sphere of observation. With that further experience she will achieve much better things than she has yet accomplished. *The Twin Sisters* is full of promise, but nothing more. She has shown capacities to be cultivated; until that is done, her performances can hold only a third or fourth rank in the array of fiction.

It appears from the preface that *Oakfield* was written long ago, and that it has been sent to the press with very slight revision, because of the interest which has been revived in England about Indian affairs. It is designed to be a fair and truthful picture of Indian life—somewhat unpleasing, it must be confessed; but the author assures us that it is "tolerably correct." The personages introduced are, however, shadows. They embody the characteristics of society in India, but they are not portraits of persons living or dead. They are represented in the novel as wanting in moral tone, as indulging in a superficial scepticism, mistaken for freedom of thought; but, says the author, "if this were not so, the greater part of *Oakfield* would be false; it is because I believe it on the whole to be true, that I have determined to publish it."

*Oakfield*, the hero, goes to India to seek his fortune, and his adventures there constitute the thread by which the author connects a wide range of sketches of East Indian life. The plot is nothing, but the descriptions are extremely graphic; the society of India is brought bodily before our eyes, and the dialogues are singularly spirited and dramatic. To those who desire to make acquaintance with life in India, *Oakfield* will be more serviceable than any traveller or letter-writer we have ever read. We could extract twenty scenes that would repay perusal, if we had space for passages from novels; but being unable to do this, we recommend the work itself to our readers, who will not regret to have sent to the circulating library for it.

The *History of a Flirt* was famous in its day. The title was attractive, and there was truth in the conception, and earnestness in the composition. *The Roses* is not so fortunate a name; and undoubtedly there is a great deal in a name, as publishers know, and these "Roses" will probably disprove Shakspeare's saying. Nor is *The Roses* so attractive a story as was its predecessor; but it is better written, better sustained, and the characters are more perfectly conceived and more distinctly developed—it is, in fact, the production of a more experienced mind. Years have not rolled over the author in vain; her powers have matured; she thinks more and feels less.

But who are the *Roses*? Three young ladies, whose characters are typified respectively by the white, the red, and the wild rose. Here are three heroines to interest us, and their fortunes, interwoven, fill up the incidents of the tale. Alice Montgomery is the red rose, Frances Delaney is the white rose. The Montgomerys are wealthy people who have invited Frances, the daughter of an officer, whose mother had been a friend of Mrs. Montgomery to pay a visit to them. A warm friendship springs up between the young girls, whose dispositions were, as usual in such cases, very unlike—Alice being lively, thoughtless, and wilful; Frances grave, sensible, and accustomed to concede to the wills of others. Henry Dunevan, a true novel hero, is introduced to the friends, and thence the complications of the plot. He falls in love with Alice, and to procure opportunities of access to her, cultivates a sort of friendship with her friend Frances, who, mistaking his attentions to her for regard, falls in love with him. After a while the truth is made manifest, and Frances, in a fit of despair, yields to the importunities of her friends, and marries a man very much her senior, for whom she has no other feeling than respect. But she is a sensible girl, and respect becomes regard, and she determines to make the best of her lot, however unromantic, and is as happy as people in the real world usually are. As for Alice, she is swayed only by her feelings and her vanity. She first favours Dunevan, then discards him, and in defiance of parental remonstrance, and perhaps partly because it was objected to, marries one Mr. Freemantle Hope, who proves to be a heartless

fellow, who had sought her only for her money, and so she is as miserable as she deserved to be.

The writer's skill is shown in the working up of scenes. The despair of Frances when she finds out that Dunevan does not love her is depicted with great power. The style is fluent and graceful, perhaps somewhat too copious of words, but pleasant to read. Altogether, *The Roses* is a better novel than any that has come before us this season, and will be a safe "investment" for the libraries.

Of *Confidence*, we scarcely know how to speak. It has no remarkable features for praise or blame. It is even commonplace, such as might be expected from a young lady of cultivated tastes who knows little of the world beyond what books have taught her; and books alone cannot supply materials for a truthful picture of life, which a novel ought to be. Now Miss Gee has read a great many novels, and from them she has formed in her own mind an ideal of a hero and a heroine, a passionate papa, a scheming mamma, a pert lady's-maid, a sly governess, a demon in human form who sets everybody by the ears, and makes a plot—a certain amount of love, crossed of course, but all right at last; a death or two, to furnish materials for some pages of pathos, and these, put together in a conventional fashion, compose a novel which has no novelty—which any person could compose who can write good English—which inexperienced novel readers will peruse with pleasure, perhaps—but to which the practised patrons of the circulating libraries will object as being made up of the identical persons and incidents they have met with before a hundred times. Such is *Confidence*.

*The Betrothed*, and the *Highland Widow* occupy the nineteenth volume of the magnificent Standard Library edition of *The Waverley Novels*. It includes the author's introduction and notes, and two beautiful steel engravings.—*The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*, a freshman at Oxford, originally, we believe, published in one of the magazines, has been produced by Cooke in one of his cheap and profusely illustrated volumes, from drawings by the author. The woodcuts are as clever as the text, and almost every page has one. The writer must be intimately acquainted with college life, for his pictures are drawn with wonderful truth.—*Blanche the Huguenot*, is a novel introduced into the "Illustrated Library" of Ingram and Cooke. It is designed to exhibit the consequences of the Edict of Nantes to a humble but virtuous family, and generally to embody the manners and spirit of the time. The author has performed his task with considerable ability, and the engraver has added much to the interest by his excellent woodcuts.

## POETRY AND THE DRAMA.

*Dramas of Calderon: Tragic, Comic, and Legendary*. Translated from the Spanish by DENIS FLORENCE MCCARTHY, Esq. In 2 vols. London: Dolman.

*Six Dramas of Calderon*. Freely translated by EDWARD FITZGERALD. London: Pickering.

THE philosophic, dramatic, and artistic position of Calderon is anything but fixed and positive, for who shall decide when critics disagree? Before the present century, Calderon was almost unknown in England; and now, after much analysis, and many translations in stately books and less enduring magazines, of the prolific Spanish poet, he has no determined and unquestioned place in literature. If the public are to exercise no penetration, and if they are to trust wholly to critics, the evidence is so conflicting that it is difficult to decide whether Calderon is merely a talented artist, or the greatest dramatic genius. Shelley read him with "inexpressible wonder and delight," and followed up his rapture by translating scenes from the *Magico Prodigioso*, which have much of Calderon's splendour, and, perhaps, more of the translator's warmth of colour.

Schlegel, either from a religious sympathy, or a one-sided literary judgment, placed Calderon above Shakspeare—an Alpine elevation infinitely higher than our comprehension. This we consider a German exaggeration, not reconcilable by critical laws or universal consent. If to the enthusiasm of Tieck and the Schlegels Calderon owes a broadened fame, he is indebted to them likewise for the misfortune, either unwitting or wilful, of being over-panegyrised. On the other hand, Mr. G. H. Lewes, a shrewd strong-headed man, profoundly appreciates Calderon's immense power over language, and his brilliant ornaments, yet insists that "he does not deserve the title of



a great poet," because he has "no great thoughts or intense passions." The longest and most elaborate article on Calderon could hardly reconcile these diverse opinions, and would better suit the pages of a quarterly than the space and objects of our fortnightly issue. It would be no inconsiderable article that could take cognisance of Hallam, Ticknor, Sismondi, Bouterwek, Forster, and the various magazines which have analysed the merits and defects of Calderon. Our simple and undoubted course is merely to direct attention to two translators, who, to say the least, have done literature good service by directing English minds to the study of the Spanish drama. Mr. McCarthy has translated some of the more famous, and Mr. Fitzgerald some of the minor, dramas of Calderon—each in his way useful, doubtless, but distinct in the manner and form of verse.

Mr. Fitzgerald's is the freest of free translations, and hence he has adopted a measure usual with the English in describing dramatic incident and passion. Mr. McCarthy is more strict, and he has preserved the species of versification used by Calderon, and has naturally fallen into "assonant rhymes"—that is to say, the rhymes are not continuous, but incidental. There is, consequently, harmony, ease, and truthfulness. Apart from the translator's skill and correctness, we certainly give the preference to Mr. McCarthy's translations, because they are a transfer of higher thoughts and beauties than could be drawn from the minor plays chosen by Mr. Fitzgerald. To each translator, however, we are indebted for broadening English knowledge of a poet half buried under mountains of panegyrics and detractions, but who still remains the first dramatist of Spain, though not the first dramatist of the world.

*Pearly from the Belfry.* By G. LINNÆUS BANKS  
London: Hope and Co.

MR. G. LINNÆUS BANKS is known for his lyrical contributions to many periodicals of the day. He is a disciple in the school of kindly thoughts and gentle feelings, one of those social poets who endeavour, and not in vain, to leave the world better and lovelier and holier than they found it. Every man must be delighted to see that poetry and poems, once only appreciated and understood by a few, have grown to be the public and domestic monitors of the age. Even as a few stirring lyrics have forced individuals into the front of battle and carnage, so, with a changed condition, do they help now to strengthen universal brotherhood. Silently, for we mark but hear not their progress, do many brief poems build up monuments sacred to generous thoughts and tender sympathies, even as the small insects under the troubled waters build up the coral reef into substance and beauty. Poetry, always more or less a regenerator, is now one among the chief regenerators of man. What do these *Pearly from the Belfry* mean, but chimes from the watch-tower of love? What was poor Tom Hood but a ringer in this sacred tower? How eloquently his serious chimes make music for the lone and heavy heart, while the world is mistaking him all the while for a pantaloon. Oh, there have been and are melodious ringers in this belfry, in this chamber of high and noble aspirations! Not the least among them are Charles Mackay, Eliza Cook, Charles Swain, and G. Linnæus Banks—not great poets, we shall be told, nor are they, when subjected to the highest test, such as we should apply to Shakspeare or Shelley. But what of that?—since they are useful poets, and in themselves have established the important fact, which the world had done well to have admitted long since, that poetry is not a shadow, but a substance. When a reader derives pleasure by observing how imagination "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name," it is much; but much more when he feels and understands the direct bearing of poetry on the domestic habits of man. We have no disposition to probe Mr. G. Linnæus Banks's poems with the sharp lance of criticism; they have a meaning, are utterances of love, and therefore we accept them. If a reviewer were disposed to be cynical, these honest poems would put him to shame, because they are appeals from human heart to heart, and are infinitely wiser than a critic's ill-humour. In the details of verse, and as a lyrist, always best when most fluent and melodious, Mr. Banks may challenge comparison with names that are very luminous in the page of literature. But the matter of his muse pleases us even better than the manner, of which our reader shall judge:—

#### RAGS AND TATTERS.

Rags and tatters, rags and tatters,  
O! the curse of these small matters!  
Woe to him who, shorn of riches,  
Wears the cast-off coat and breeches!  
Though he once could keep a carriage,  
And had "thousands" on his marriage;  
Though he's given fetes and dinners  
To some score of courtly sinners;  
If he's now in rags and tatters,  
These are all forgotten matters.

Rags and tatters, rags and tatters,  
O! the scorn of these old matters!  
If a man is brave and holy,  
Arm'd 'gainst crime and vice and folly;  
If he practise self-denial,  
And withstands life's fiercest trial;  
Blest with moral strength and reason,  
Fitted for each work and season,—  
But is clad in rags and tatters,  
They conceal those minor matters.

Rags and tatters, rags and tatters,  
O! the curse of those poor matters!  
God preserve the sons of labour,  
Watcharound our ill-clad neighbour;  
Bless our poorer kin by dozens,  
Even down to second cousins;  
But if thou, O God! forsake 'em,  
Then the world must overtake 'em,  
With its scorn of those small matters,  
Rags and tatters, rags and tatters!

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

##### THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

*The Russian Shores of the Black Sea, in the Autumn of 1852; with a Voyage down the Volga, and a Tour through the Country of the Don Cossacks.* By LAURENCE OLIPHANT, Author of "A Journey to Nepal." Edinburgh and London: Blackwoods. 1853.

MR. OLIPHANT'S volume forms a valuable contribution to our present scanty stock of knowledge with regard to the internal state of the Russian empire; and will be more generally acceptable from the lively and agreeable style in which he imparts much new and interesting information. He has not only collected an amount of important matter in reference to remote provinces which have rarely excited the attention of the traveller, but presented a vivid picture of the habits, manners, appearance, and political condition of the people whose country he explored, and amongst whom, with a few rapid strokes of a vigorous pen, he succeeds admirably in carrying the mind of his readers. The Russian peasant; the Tartar tribes; the ill-used Cossack; the Moravian colonists; the honest sect of Jews to be found on the plains of Tartary; the Muscovite, with his stupid indolence; the conquered races, with their untamed, nomadic, or Oriental habits,—all take an appropriate place on the wide canvass. No work of a similar nature, and with the same lightness of execution, has conveyed an equally clear idea of the vast empire, composed of so many disproportioned parts.

"Liberty is old, despotism new," said Madame de Staël; and the truth strikes painfully a traveller over the wide plains, the ancient towns, and desert steppes of the Russian empire. The record of the prosperous republics of Novgorod, of Pskov, of Potock,—the memory, half effaced, of a time when the word Cossack was synonymous with freedom,—the desolate palaces and oppressed people of the ancient Khans of Tartary mysteriously recall the mass of ruins, seated on which the youngest state in Europe has gathered strength to crush Poland, enslave Austria, paralyse Germany, control Turkey, and menace even the safety and the territories of the western powers.

The elements which constitute the Russian empire are elements of dissolution; but, as development of life precedes the period of decay, it has not been calculated how long this unwieldy body will retain vigour to imprison the wretched souls subjected to its dominion. Russians themselves despair considering the problem; and men, who cherish in their hearts vague visions of republicanism, adhere to the autocratic principle, as alone adapted to concentrate and to direct gigantic forces whose instinctive impulse is to break asunder. Alexander admired Napoleon. Karamsin wept at the fall of Robespierre, watching with interest the experiment how a firm central authority could subsist with the expansion of a free nation. There was a profound meaning in the tears of Karamsin; he deplored, not the republic, nor the death of an individual, but the failure of the combined idea of a progressive nation and an absolute master. The contemplation clouded the last days of Alexander. The Emperor of Russia had destroyed the Emperor of the French; but the idea which sustained the

imaginative spirit of Alexander was entombed with Napoleon at St. Helena.

Nicholas commenced his reign with a practical lesson, and discarded future theories. The nation had made a feeble effort to cut the Gordian knot of Alexander's speculations, by pronouncing against the autocracy. Nicholas struck a blow in earnest, and extinguished the nation.

The interior organisation of Russia is constructed entirely for political, that is, autocratical ends; the interests of commerce are sacrificed to the necessity of checking the spirit of individual enterprise—a spirit dangerous under any form of despotic government, but especially so in a state whose widely scattered provinces preserve from no remote date the tradition of independence and the sense of wrong. There is a common expression, "to conquer or die," which describes the destiny of Russia. The accumulation of armies, the draining from the country of bold or disaffected men, the common impulse created by schemes of foreign conquest, the feeling of ambition aroused and of suspense continued—kindle in Russia the passions of hope and fear by which mankind are led and governed. But violence has power to subdue, none to establish; the sword of the Muscovite cannot be returned to its scabbard; continual aggrandisement is the condition of his existence. An outward, to exhaust the principle of the inward growth—a forcing of leaves and blossoms before the root can put forth its fibres. Development of the physical resources of their country is denied to the subjects of Russia. Freedom of commerce is denied them, because it involves freedom of thought, and the arts of peace are opposed to the exercise of brute force. The history of industry in Russia, like that of her conquered populations, repeats the triumph of barbarism over the element of liberty and prosperity. It is instructive to compare the past with the present.

#### TRADE IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

TOWARDS the end of the thirteenth century, the Genoese established factories in the Crimea, and on the sea of Azov; and the position of Tana, at the mouth of the Tanais, or Don, goes far to show that communications were carried on by means of this river and the Volga. Monopolising the whole of the carrying trade between Europe and Asia, the traffic passed exclusively through the ports of these enterprising Italians, and continued to do so until the close of the fifteenth century, when they fell under the sway of the Ottoman empire; and thus it was, either by way of the Phasis and the Cur, or across this narrow isthmus, that nearly 600 years ago, all those Eastern productions which delighted and amazed our ancestors were conveyed. Then richly freighted caravans passed along the dreary track, laden with the merchandise which was to supply a continent; while now, in the nineteenth century, and in this civilised empire, nothing is to be seen but an occasional creaking bullock-cart carrying timber or iron, the produce of the bleak north. But there is an association fraught with a still deeper significance, attached to this neck of land, which has served at the same time as a highway for the inroads of barbarian hordes, and as a barrier to that commercial enterprise in the East, upon the extension of which the civilisation of two continents in a great measure formerly depended. Here some centuries ago, in an attempt made by the Porte to improve its commercial relations with central Asia—which had been much impaired by the diversion of Eastern trade from the Overland route to that round the Cape—the Ottoman troops first encountered Muscovite barbarians, who then succeeded in obstructing the formation of a canal, designed by Selim the Second. That enlightened enterprise, undertaken under Mahomedan auspices, has never been carried out by a Christian power, while the blighting influence which was then exercised upon the cause of civilisation still characterises the Russian sway; and a defeat of the Ottoman arms by the Muscovite aggressors of the present day will be no less disastrous to that cause than was the savage onslaught first made upon the Turks by the untamed subjects of Ivan the Terrible! About the middle of the last century, an English company was formed for the purpose of carrying on an oriental commerce through Russia; but the ignorance and jealousy of the Muscovite Government remained unchanged, though manifested in a more civilised form, and the enterprise proved a total failure.

#### PROHIBITIVE POLICY OF RUSSIA.

To explain this it is necessary to discover the real principle upon which the Government acts; for it is absurd to suppose that it can be so infatuated as to believe that the protective system which it now pursues can ever advance the real interests of the country. Projecting into the heart of Asia, while it monopolises more than half the continent of Europe,—possessing means of communication with the East by way of the Caspian, denied to any other European power,—intersected by rivers expressly adapted to connect the ports upon the four seas between which she is situated—Russia might become the highway of nations. The

wealth of Europe and Asia would thus pour into the coffers of the country through the various channels which it alone could so advantageously offer for the commerce of the world; and the only reason why this result has not long since taken place is the virtual prohibition by the Government of the existence of such a state of things, by its denying to all foreign goods the right of transit through the Russian dominions. . . . In spite of the anxiety of Government to induce an opposite belief, we are constrained to suppose that is only solicitous for the prosperity of the nation so long as this prosperity can co-exist with the permanent state of gross ignorance and barbarism in which the people are kept; for it is evident that an extensive intercourse with European nations would open the eyes of this enslaved population, and introduce these principles of freedom which would soon prove utterly subversive to the imperial power as it at present exists. In order, therefore, that the traveller may duly appreciate the system of political economy practised by the Government, it is necessary he should remember that its interests and those of the people are diametrically opposed to one another. He will then cease to wonder that men-of-war, instead of merchant steamers, regularly navigate the Caspian. The most wretched craft are freighted with the rich fabrics of Persia, while iron steamers are appropriated to the transport of precious soldiers. These steamers are also employed in blockading the eastern shores of Circassia, and are ready, in case of a war with Persia, to convey troops to that kingdom. At present they ply twice a month between Astrakan, Bakou, Leukerum, Enzeli, and Astrabad. I was informed, moreover, that two iron steamers had been recently launched upon the sea of Aral, with a view, it was said, of carrying out some commercial projects. These may some day prove to be of rather a questionable nature. There is a line of Cossacks extending across the Kirghes deserts to the sea of Aral, established no doubt for the purpose of protecting these so-called mercantile arrangements.

The influence of the Government and the apathy of the people, equally disastrous in their effect, occasion a disproportionate elevation in the price of Russian productions, and combine to throw the chief trade of Russia into the hands of foreign merchants. Russian merchants belonging to the first guild, and to a certain extent those in the second—for the grades of Russian caste are universal amongst all classes—are alone able to engage in foreign commerce; and comparatively few of these surmount the preliminary difficulties—the license duty to be paid, and the capital required by Government before they are permitted to embark in foreign transactions. Notwithstanding the new and extensive trade of the Black Sea, only four merchants have been added to the first guild in the course of fifteen years; but there is an increase of one-third in the number of peasants holding certificates to trade within the empire, and profiting in a limited manner from the increase of foreign trade, whose advantages are virtually closed to the higher mercantile interests of the country. These petty merchants in their dealings control the merchants of the coast, little scrupulous with regard to the honesty of their dealings.

#### INFLUENCE ON FOREIGN MARKETS.

It is this class who frequent the numerous fairs throughout the country, and by means of them exercise an indirect influence upon the foreign markets; and when, therefore, we find that the supplemental value with which articles are burdened before they reach the place of export is sixty per cent. upon the productions of the soil, and twenty-five per cent. on those of industry, no other result can be expected in a country where the want of capital, the want of enterprise, the want of liberty, the want of roads, and the want of honesty, combine to produce it.

The numerous fairs annually celebrated throughout Russia are intended to supply the deficiency of towns. Mr. Oliphant states the whole urban population of the empire does not exceed five millions. St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Odessa, are the only cities containing more than a hundred thousand inhabitants. It is calculated from official reports that in an area of 130 square miles but one town occurs, with an average population of 7000. The relation between serf and proprietor is a barrier to that application of labour necessary for their existence; his owner's profit offers the peasant no inducement to undertake the trouble of acquiring the skill of an artisan. Payment of an annual sum, in proportion to remuneration received, is exacted in return for permission to exercise a trade; nor are the merchants in happier plight. At St. Petersburg, the dues demanded for position in the first guild amount to 3000 rubles, and rent of a shop adds to the expenses 2000 or 3000 more. The protection professedly afforded to home products by the high duty on foreign goods, is balanced by a system equally repressive to the sale and manu-

facture of goods at home. The fairs, under so remarkable a system of political economy, compete successfully with the towns. Thus, at Nijni Novgorod, where house-rent forms the sole charge, foreign goods are exhibited at lower prices than would be obtained for them at a sea-port 700 miles nearer the locality that furnished them; while Russian manufactures are sold for less than they would cost at the distant towns where they were made; articles are procurable in the narrow streets of the fair which the best shops of St. Petersburg and Moscow cannot display. To this market the streams of the Kama and the Volga convey the produce of the East—from China, tea; from Siberia, iron, furs, and skins; madder, hides, dried fruits, Caucasian wines, and other contributions, from the countries bordering on the Caspian. The tempting wares are bought, sold, and exchanged, by motley groups collected to the spot, in every striking costume of the East and West, from the poor Mujik's dirty sheepskin to the gay dress of the Georgian.

The introduction of railroads threatens in time to subvert the primitive system of commerce adopted in the dominions of the Czar. As greater facilities of communication arise, towns will be created, and trade undergo a revolutionary process; but Russian measures of improvement are prudently prepared and never premature. At present commercial advantages are of secondary importance in the management of railway operations, which appear chiefly valuable for the conveyance of troops. The connection of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and Warsaw will enable the Czar to assemble, in the space of a few days, the armies of the north and south upon the Austrian and Prussian frontiers.

The formation of a railroad in Russia is a speculation of political moment in the eyes of Europe, and opens a new phase of observation in the history of a vast empire, upon whose future destiny hangs probably the destiny of the world. Mr. Oliphant remarks—

Through this same quarter of the world, many hundred years ago, poured those barbaric hordes which overran civilised Europe. It would indeed be a singular testimony to the spirit of the age, if the next invaders made their descent by means of railroads.

In striking contrast to the idea of railway speed, the author describes the clumsy machine in which wheat is carried along the Volga; and, if delayed by unfavourable seasons and contrary winds, completes in about two years a journey that a steamer would accomplish in two months. Wheat, which at Samara is thirty-five copecks, rises by this mode of transit to sixty at St. Petersburg.

The southern parts of the empire contain enormous tracts of virgin soil capable, under proper cultivation, of providing nearly sufficient food for Europe. The Crimea was annexed to Russia by craft, and her sway was established there by cruelty. The aboriginal Tartars are perishing from their native plains, and no new population succeeds to unlock the mines of wealth concealed in their bosom. The peasant, pinched with hunger under some distant and less favoured climate in the vast territory of his master, is utterly precluded from migrating to a province whose resources are only limited by scarcity of labour. The sums needed for passports, bribes, and other expenses form an effectual prohibition. Foreigners are not allowed to possess land in the Crimea unless they settle as naturalised Russian subjects. Agriculture, indeed, suffers throughout the country from the common system of oppression. The ignorance of the peasants; their condition of serfs; the removable natural difficulties of the country; and the permanent artificial difficulties imposed by government—inflict barbarism upon the people, and condemn them to privations in the midst of plenty. Advantage of position in some places forces prosperity upon the inhabitants. Thus, the south-east provinces, since the abolition of the corn law in England, have benefited by the new trade with the shores of the Black Sea opened through the energy of the Greek merchants of the Mediterranean.

But Russia regards the improving prospects of commerce in other countries with the same jealousy, awakened by any movement of intelligence that might change their character in her own. Moldavia, Wallachia, and Roumelia are rapidly rising in ability to compete with Russia in the corn trade of the Black Sea. Wheat exported from the Danube rivals Polish Odessa in the London markets; and, as political objects influence the Czar's commercial regulations

at home, a commercial one fortified the political scheme of occupation abroad, which had for its direct and immediate advantage the closing of the Danube to Europe. "War to the knife" means, to strike the knife at the root of that commercial progress which is the source of the independence of nations.

We regret our limits prevent us from entering into many subjects of interest treated by the author; we must be content to recommend sincerely the perusal of his book. Our concluding extracts are scattered observations, calculated to throw light on the character of life in Russia.

#### ADORATION OF THE VIRGIN.

Just opposite to us, in a small niche near a chapel, hung a picture of the Virgin; and it was amusing to watch the amount of devotion which each passer-by thought it necessary to bestow. The most devout passengers were old women, who never failed to make long and repeated reverences before the holy picture. The next most scrupulous class were the Mujiks, who, with beards as greasy and ragged as their sheepskins, blocked up the way for a quarter of an hour at a time, bowing reverentially to the ground, throwing back their long tangled locks every time they crossed themselves, and evidently feeling deeply the necessity and importance of the ceremonies they were performing. After them came the young women, who seldom passed without a sort of nod, either as an acknowledgement of the respect due, or because they thought it wiser to be on the safe side in case of accidents; at any rate, they did not feel called upon to linger among Mujiks or old women, to go through a ceremony by no means becoming. Next in order came the priests, who paid as little veneration to the picture as decency would permit—perhaps because they had better at home. Of the remaining crowds that daily passed the chapel, few did more than take off their hats, and the more respectable part of the population took no notice of it whatever.

#### MUSCOVITE DECEPTION.

Nothing bears looking into in Russia, from a metropolis to a police-office: in either case, a slight acquaintanceship is sufficient; and first impressions should never be dispelled by a too minute inspection. No statement should be questioned, however preposterous, where the credit of the country is involved; and no assertion relied upon, even though it be a gratuitous piece of information—such as, that there is a diligence to the next town, or an inn in the next street. There is a singular difficulty in getting at the truth, probably originating with subordinate officials, whose duty it seems to be to deceive you, and whose support is derived from bribes which you give them for their information. Whatever may be the cause, the effect certainly is, that a most mysterious secrecy pervades everything; and an anxious desire is always visible to produce an impression totally at variance with the real state of the case.

#### SPIRITUAL DESTITUTION OF THE SERFS.

Here, in a country which boasts of the rapid advances it has recently made in civilisation, we saw a large and populous village in a state of utter heathenism, and apparently destined to remain so; though it is a question whether it might not be considered fortunate in having escaped the infliction of some profligate priest. Even if the plea of being unable to cope with an immoral and debased priesthood could excuse the neglect which the absence of any place of worship implies on the part of the Government, this very incapacity ought at least to act as a stimulus to the improvement of the intellectual condition of the people by means of secular instruction, thus enabling them to acquire for themselves that information in spiritual as well as temporal concerns, of which they must otherwise remain destitute. A very different view, however, is entertained by those in authority, all schools being positively prohibited, except in a few large towns; a state of things which must seriously retard the due development of the resources of the country, composed as they are in an equal degree of moral and physical elements.

#### MORAVIAN MISSIONARIES AT SAREPTA, AND PROTECTION OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

The colony was established in 1769, during the reign of the Empress Catharine, and consisted of but thirty individuals of both sexes. This little band belonged to the Moravian persuasion, and was under the guidance of some worthy missionaries, whose chief object in choosing so remote a locality was the conversion of the Calmucks. No sooner had some symptoms of success, however, attended the efforts of these noble-minded men, than the Greek clergy interposed, and insisted that the converts should be admitted into their church. Thinking, perhaps, that the Calmuck was as enlightened an individual while a Buddhist, as he would be after he joined the Greek church, the Moravian missionaries did not persist in their efforts at evangelisation. The Government, as in duty bound, supported the priests in their opposition, and may thus be congratulated on having aided and abetted a Christian Church in its successful attempt to deprive a whole nation of the blessings of the Gospel. No effort is made to atone for this wanton bigotry, by the establishment of missions by the



Greek Church among these wandering tribes. Denying to them the means of acquiring a knowledge of those important truths which the Moravians so earnestly desired to impart, it yet supplies no substitute for them,—an omission which is tantamount to positively prohibiting the Calmucks from attempting to reach heaven at all.

#### MANAGEMENT OF THE RUSSIAN NAVY.

The wages of the seamen are so low—about sixteen rubles a-year—that it is not unnatural they should desire to increase so miserable a pittance by any means in their power. The consequence is, that from the members of the naval board to the boys that blow the smiths' bellows in the dockyard, everybody shares the spoils obtained by an elaborately devised system of plunder, carried on somewhat in this way:—A certain quantity of well-seasoned oak being required, Government issues tenders for the supply of the requisite amount. A number of contractors submit their tenders to a board appointed for the purpose of receiving them, who are regulated in their choice of a contractor, not by the amount of his tender, but of his bribe. The fortunate individual selected immediately sub-contracts upon a somewhat similar principle. Arranging to be supplied with the timber for half the amount of his tender, the sub-contractor carries on the game, and perhaps the eighth link in this contracting chain is the man who, for an absurdly low figure, undertakes to produce the seasoned wood. His agents in the central provinces accordingly float a quantity of green pines and firs down the Dnieper and Bog to Nicholaieff, which are duly handed up to the head contractor, each man pocketing the difference between his contract and that of his neighbour. When the wood is produced before the board appointed to inspect it, another bribe seasons it, and the Government, after paying the price of well-seasoned oak, is surprised that the 120 gunship of which it has been built is unfit for service in five years. The rich harvest that is reaped by those employed in building and fitting her up is as easily obtained; and to such an extent did the dockyard workmen trade in government stores, &c. that merchant vessels were for a long time prohibited from entering the harbour. I was not surprised, after obtaining this interesting description of Russian ingenuity, to learn that, out of the imposing array before us, there were only two ships in a condition to undertake a voyage round the Cape. If, therefore, in estimating the strength of the Russian navy, we deduct the ships which, for all practical purposes, are unseaworthy, it will appear that the Black Sea fleet, that standing bugbear of the unfortunate Porte, will dwindle into a force more in proportion to its limited sphere of action, and to the enemy which, in the absence of any other European power, it would encounter. There is no reason to suppose that the navy forms an exception to the rule, that all the great national institutions of Russia are artificial. The Emperor and the army are not to be regarded in that light, though the latter will doubtless be glad of an early opportunity of redeeming its character, which has been somewhat shaken by the unsatisfactory displays of prowess lately exhibited in the Caucasus, and the absurd misadventures of one of the divisions, which ultimately failed in taking part in the last Hungarian campaign, for lack of a properly organised commissariat.

#### RUSSIA'S MILITARY ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE CAUCASUS.

We have only to remember that the present position of Russia in the Caucasus has remained unaltered for the last twenty-two years, notwithstanding the vast resources which have been brought to bear upon this interminable war, to perceive that the brilliant appearance of the Russian soldier on parade affords no criterion of his efficiency in the field of battle; while no more convincing proof could be desired of the gross corruption and mismanagement which characterises the proceedings of this campaign, than the fact of an overwhelming force of two hundred thousand men being held in check for so long a period by the small but gallant band who are fighting for their snow-clad mountains and their liberty.

#### The Provocations of Madame Palissy. Arthur Hall, Virtue and Co.

THERE are two sides to every question: if there were not, we should lose much wholesome agitation, and be drifted upon some Happy Island inhabited by so many "happy families," cruelly deprived of a natural instinct, by some unnatural cause. But, fortunately for human nature, there are two sides to every question; and the world's right side of the question is not necessarily the most enviable side as far as peace, quiet, and comfort are concerned. Poets and philosophers look well upon paper, and the admiring reader and disciple never suspects that the one mulets his tailor, and the other runs a milk-score. Heroes are very large gentlemen in newspapers, and fill such space that they become beams in the world's eye; but it is well known that to their own valets they cease to be heroes. Human nature comes into the world with various spots and blemishes;

and well it is, in many respects, that it is so. We know it again by its wens or freckles. We should be utterly daunted in the presence of perfection, and discouraged at the thought of stainless humanity. Sin has an ugly look; but it always suggests to the beholder to go and do better.

Here, now, is one Bernard Palissy, to whose acquaintance, through Mr. Morley's biography of him, we introduced the readers of the *Caric* a few months ago. This Bernard was a godly potter, a patient experimentaliser, a genuine patriot, a humble man—and, in saying that he was a humble man, we have condensed a very laudatory epitaph in few words. But, like his own platters and vases, he had his frailties. He had shortcomings obnoxious to the connubial life. The pursuit of the white enamel was not always consistent with the hearth and the cupboard. Firewood and furnaces had their uses, but they did not buy the wife a new gown, nor put shoes upon the feet of the babies. Madame Palissy loved, and had a high respect for Monsieur Palissy; but she could not understand his continued crusades against humble pipkins and porringers, and his much consumption of firewood in abortive "trials." Hence Madame Palissy had her "provocations," to which we give ear in the present well-told, lively, and natural semi-fiction. It is one of the most pleasing books and affecting tales we have read for some time; doing great credit to the conceptive talents of the writer—or authoress, as we suspect the matter to be. We say, authoress, because really none of the "he gender" (to borrow from a Transatlantic grammarian) would know so well how to put little children to bed, tuck them up, and provide them so pleasantly with bread and butter aliments.

As a specimen of the lady's style (do not forget to look at Mr. Warren's frontispiece) take the following. Bernard is red-hot after a new experiment, and makes "a horrid crash of broken pottery."

"What are you about, now?" cried Victorine, very tempestuously. "No harm done," said he, picking up the fragments, and storing them up in his handkerchief. "No harm done? when you have broken the porringer!" "My dear, I wanted to break it." "What for?" "To try some experiments with the pieces. All right." "Well, it seems to me all wrong," said she, more quietly; "I can't understand it." "No, dear Victorine, that's the very thing; you *can't* understand it; you must not expect to understand it; there is no need for you to understand it; but, believe me, dear, all's right, nevertheless. Go, wash Paul's face, love, that's your province; to break potsherds is mine." And he kissed her with such an air of good-natured superiority, and walked off with his potsherds in such state, that she knew not what to make of him, nor whether to be mollified or vexed. Just at this moment, little Paul, having smeared his face *ad nauseum*, and swallowed all he wanted of his galotte, toddled out to the door with his little pipkin, and, with as much of his father's gesture as he could imitate, dashed it to the ground; the vehement action bringing him immediately down in a sitting position, from which he took no pains to recover himself, but set up a fit of baby laughing and crowing, as if he were conscious of having hit it off exactly. Victorine, amused and provoked, snatched the little rogue up in her arms, shook him, and then smothered him with kisses, as she carried him into the house.

Here again is another attempt to discover

#### THE WHITE ENAMEL.

His successful mixture for the white enamel had now to be tried on a large scale. The materials took him an entire month to grind, and when reduced to the finest powder, they had to be weighed and put together in just proportions, and then undergo a fresh course of pounding and grinding. The weather was cold, but hard work kept him warm; for he could not afford himself a fire while he had nothing to bake. Then he lighted his furnace: he did not spare his wood; he did not spare himself; he fed his fire all day, all night. He put his vessels in, that the enamel might melt over them. It did not. The experiment was a gigantic failure. He was in trouble, but not in despair. Victorine, angry with him, would not go near him—she sent him his galotte by Fleurette. The little girl would gladly have stayed to chatter with him, but he sent her away. All day he kept heaping on more and more wood; the setting sun streamed in on him at his labour; darkness fell; the owls began to hoot, the farm-house dogs to bark. Still the enamel did not melt. A second night, and all night long, he never forsook his post. He was bathed in perspiration; he threw off the greater part of his clothing; he heaped on yet more wood: the enamel did not melt. A third day the child brought him his meals. Victorine passed a third day and night alone. She began to be outrageous. The enamel did not melt. A fourth night. She "battered at his door, and screamed, "Will you then come out?" he had fastened the bolt. The day and night passed.

The enamel did not melt. On the fifth day she became terrified. She called to him, pleaded, prayed. All in vain. He heard her; was dying to come forth, but dared not. The enamel would not melt. On the sixth day he was almost spent, almost maddened. It struck him the compounds might have been wrongly mixed. Exhausted as he was, he resumed his pounding and grinding; keeping up the furnace all the while, lest the heat should decrease. The labour of years might now be repaid, if he could but keep on a little longer! If he could not keep on a little longer, he would lose the labour of years!

This is a most truthful fiction. Perhaps its only fault is its abruptness. Those who have read the life of "Palissy the Potter," will enjoy this very natural sequence to it.

In a letter addressed to Lord Brougham, F. RUSSELL, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, makes some valuable suggestions for the "Improvement and Consolidation of the Law of Arbitration." It is a topic beyond our province, and we therefore merely name the fact.

—Mr. FULCHER'S *Ladies' Memorandum-Book* appears early. It is a pocket-book for ladies, having all the essentials of that convenience, and a selection of poetry and charades.—The great apostle of temperance was Robert Kettle, Esq., editor of the *Scottish Temperance Journal*. The Rev. W. REED has written a memoir of his life, prefacing selections from his writings. Possibly they will interest his friends.—VACHER'S *Stamp Duties* is a useful little book, carefully prepared.—*Glenay's Garden Almanack* for 1854 contains all kinds of information useful to those who have gardens, with a complete calendar of operations.

—Mr. JOHN LOCKE has published his essay, read before the British Association, on the *Recovery of Ireland*. He points out the sources of her future prosperity, and in an appendix he has collected a mass of statistical facts which statesmen and political economists will do well to study.—*Pantomime Budgets* is a very grave comedy. In truth, the author has not a turn for jesting. He writes sensibly on heavy themes like taxation; but he should not attempt to crack jokes.

#### PERIODICALS AND SERIALS.

*Blackwood* certainly is infected by the season, for the November number is unusually dull. Lady Lee has vanished from view, and there is no introduction of new personages to occupy her place in the reader's regards. The most attractive of the papers is on a theme now well nigh exhausted, "Haydon's Autobiography." "Brute Life in the Alpine Regions," is a splendid bit of natural history. "Our Commissioner in Paris" is a smart essay, and a second part of "The Narcotics we indulge in," will doubtless be read by those who perused its predecessor. We trust the editor will soon commence another fiction. One such contribution is always desirable.

The *Dublin University Magazine* is much more lively. "Pig Lore" is capital; two biographies, of the Earl of Lucan and Sir Jasper Carew, agreeably vary the reading, and there is nothing better adapted for magazine articles than biography. The "Narrative of an Excursion to the Limbos" is a very humorous contribution, by the author of the "Bachelor of the Albany." In the way of criticism is a clever notice of a batch of recent novels. A portrait of the Bishop of Meath adds much to the attractions of this number.

The *National Miscellany* is improved slightly, but there is room for a great deal more—indeed, it needs an entire change of plan before it can fairly hope for success. "Travelling in England" is well written, and the "Prisons of Dartmoor" have a present interest, and are appropriate to the title of the work; but what shall we say of the papers on China—on the "Stones of Venice"—on the "Greek and Russian Churches," and the "Interesting Pole,"—surely, these are not national, and yet they occupy more than half the number.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* is really what it professes to be, an Historical Review and Antiquarian Record, and so it has a permanent value. It is more a work for reference than for reading; but it abounds in valuable information.

*Hogg's Instructor* for November keeps up its character as a cheap *Blackwood*. Only we would again advise the increasing of the length of the articles; they are well adapted for a penny sheet, but not for the important form of a monthly, and writers of such ability ought to be permitted more scope for the display of it. Gillilan's sketch of Sheridan is the most striking contribution to the present number.

Of the *Scottish Review* we have received the first vol. and the October number. It is devoted to the cause of Temperance; but it treats very ably of scientific and literary matters generally. Thus, there is in the October number a capital article on the "Rationale of Electro-biology," giving much the same explanation of it as the article in the *Quarterly Review* on the same subject, which has attracted so much attention. "Investments for the Working Classes" is another practical and useful paper.

Dr. R. G. Mayne has sent us the first part of a very valuable work, which he is compiling with immense

labour and research, entitled *An Expository Lexicon of the Terms, ancient and modern, in Medical and General Science*. This first part extends to the letter C. It is not a cyclopædia, but simply a dictionary, giving only the science in which the term is found and its meaning; and the words are accented so as to show their pronunciation.

The new number of the *Illustrated London Magazine* sustains the promise of the earlier numbers. The illustrations are good, evidently by artists of ability, and the writing is above the average of magazine writing in England. Captain Mayne Reid has contributed a very interesting paper on "Swan Shooting by Torchlight."

*Chambers's Journal* for November fully maintains its position as the best of the cheap periodicals. For substantial, useful information there is nothing like it; and, therefore, in spite of the multitude of rivals it has evoked, it continues to grow in favour and to extend its circulation. It is distinguished by good sense; and the articles in this part are among the best we have seen in the course of our inspection of the magazines.

Messrs. Tallis have brought out the 12th part of *Cook's Voyages*, profusely illustrated; the 10th part of the *History of Scotland*, with portraits and maps; and the 16th and 17th parts of the *Crystal Palace*, each of which contains six steel engravings of objects of the greatest interest there exhibited.

The *Freemasons' Quarterly Magazine* will doubtless be welcome to the craft, for it is not only an expositor of the history and practice of Masonry, but it diverges into the paths of general literature, and even indulges in tales!

The 23rd vol. of *Chambers's Pocket Miscellany* gives nearly thirty amusing and instructive papers for sixpence. No railway reading is so cheap and good as this.

*Sharpe's London Magazine* for November is emphati-

cally a gentlemanly periodical—the most so in appearance and in substance of all the cheap ones. It contains two beautiful engravings on steel; it is printed in a bold type, pleasant to read; the contents are purely literary, and scarcely affect to be utilitarian. If we might hint a fault, it would be to object to the too great preponderance of fiction. It would be much improved by the introduction of biography, or a good essay on some stirring topic of the time.

*Tomlinson's Cyclopædia of Useful Arts* is fast drawing to a conclusion. It has arrived at the close of the letter S. Stone, Strength of Materials, and Sugar, are the principal topics treated of in this part, and profusely illustrated.

The *Art Journal* for this month contains two engravings from the Vernon Gallery, worth a great deal more than the cost of the whole number, which contains also some twenty woodcuts of first-rate excellence, illustrating the works of Ostade, German art, and other appropriate subjects.

The *North British Review* is as vigorous as ever, and very much what the *Edinburgh* was. The organ of a sect, it is not wholly sectarian. It treats literature and politics in a broad catholic spirit, and ranges over a wide field for subjects. "The Life and Times of Madame de Staël" is the first and most attractive article in the present number; but of the same class is a Review of American Novels, and an essay on the "Language and Literature of Modern Greece," which will be read with eagerness at this time, when a Greek empire is talked about. Of a more practically useful character is a paper on "Domestic Service," that difficulty which meets and perplexes us all our lives through, and in solving which experience is sure to overturn our theories as fast as we build them up.

The second number of *Paul Peabody*, a novel by Mr. Percy B. St. John, promises well.

The *Family Friend* and the *Family Tutor* are two

very cheap periodicals, containing a wonderful amount of information at a very small price; and the *Home Companion* is another of the same class.

No. II. of the *A B C Railway Guide* deserves the success it has attained. It is as plain as the letters.

The new number of Cooke's marvellously cheap *Universal Library* contains the "Essays of Oliver Goldsmith."

The 23rd Part of the *Portrait Gallery* has seven portraits and memoirs, including those of Pitt, Wilberforce, Erskine, and Madame de Staël. It is a complete gallery of genius.

The fourteenth number of Mr. Darling's *Cyclopædia Bibliographica*, laboriously compiled, proceeds as far as the letter O. It will be an invaluable book of reference.

The *Poultry Book* is brought to a completion in the part just issued, which contains four coloured engravings by Weir; and the text gives to the poultry-fancier every information he can require.

The *True Briton* is amusing, instructive, and cheap.

The *Church of Scotland Magazine and Review* is an able religious organ, which, however, deals well and vigorously with literature, as does *Macphail's Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Journal*.

Mr. Pulman's *Book of the Aze* will be a prize to the brothers of the angle. It is a piscatorial description of that river, published in numbers, of which the tenth is before us.

Robert Owen's *Rational Review* should have been styled the "irrational." It is the avowed supporter of Spirit Rapping; and gravely reports the manifestations of the spirits during the last month. Mr. Owen actually details conversations which he asserts he has had with the spirits of the Duke of Kent and Benjamin Franklin, President Jefferson, &c.; but they talk sad nonsense. Not one answer of any use to the world does he obtain from them.

## FOREIGN LITERATURE.

### THE CRITIC ABROAD.

*Unterhaltungen über Russland* ("Conversations on Russia").—It is in a manner divulging family secrets (but no great harm can come of it) when we say that most books are lawfully begotten into the world, and seldom make their appearance before due time. The nuptials of an event and a brain once duly celebrated, a book is the natural consequence. No doubt imprudent marriages of this kind are often made, and many babes literary come into the world with wooden spoons inheritance. Indeed, it is the sober opinion of some of our acquaintances, who have begotten books that no one would pat on the head, far less stand god-father to, that a founding hospital should be erected for their reception and maintenance, with persons paid to read them. They consider it a bother, at all events, that a book cruelly neglected by the public should not become chargeable to the parish (a beneficent arrangement), instead of incumbering the shelves of the bookseller, and causing often the involuntary ascension of the author from the couch of the front parlour to the truckle-bed of the back attic. The hour, and the man for the hour, are not more certain than the book for the event. Both the one and the other may be insignificant enough—as much so as the Derbyshire dwarf and the *Eutawwill Gazette*; but there is a force in nature which put the one into a travelling caravan, and the other into type. No man this side of Bedlam writes a book anticipating the ages. No one would think of writing on the future of the Loo-choo Islands, nor about the republic of Tierra del Fuego. Writers upon unfulfilled prophecy have long purses, can bide their time, and look complacently upon their own pages unwrapping from the chandler's the sebaceous and caseous products of Dorsetshire and Gloucester. But, given the event or circumstance, however trifling, and the book is not far behind it. The circumstance need not be an urgent one either. Bishop Berkeley's tar-water drenched the world with pamphlets; Mary Tofts, who was weekly delivered of, we forget how many, rabbits, produced no end of controversy in print; and Johanna Southcot, who made due preparation of cradle and swaddling-bands for the coming Shiloh, put ever so many printing-presses in motion. Given the event—let it be a flood in the Sahara, an earthquake in Little Britain, or a revolution in the select vestry of Tithington Magna—and a book is the sequel.

Hence it is easy to understand how, if contraband salt is seized in the Euxine, we shall have *Travels in the Crimea* and *Revelations of Cir-*

cassia; and how, if Czar and Sultan have a tiff, we should have infinite volumes on Russia and Turkey. And, which is very natural, each empire shall have its partisans too. It is amusing to observe in such books what a saint Russia is made by one, and what a sinner Turkey is made by another. One country is described as hollow, rotten, and effete, while another maintains that it is healthy, powerful, and progressive. The Carrion does not blister its feet by stepping into the scalding water of politics, and does not presume to decide which direction public opinion should take on the knotty questions of the day. It passes with equal equanimity through the cold broad streets of St. Petersburg and the hot narrow streets of Constantinople, and, collecting facts respecting each from veritable sources, lays them before its readers, leaving to them the right, which it cannot interfere with, of holding strong opinions. These two countries stand in critical relationship at present, and every one is so anxious to know and believe something about each, that both at home and abroad books spring daily into being to gratify curiosity, enlist partisans, and make the most of a gaping market. We started with the title of a book, and then went rambling. These discourses on Russia are interesting, entertaining, and, where they deal with facts, wear every token of veracity. They are not calculated to make the reader fall greatly in love with the country of the Czar, or to tempt him to travel there. The work adds its testimony to the weight of testimony already existing as to the cupidity and effrontery of Russian functionaries and employés, from the highest to the lowest, and to the system of bribery that prevails, poisoning justice at every source. Some of the scenes are well sketched. He takes us into a law court, for example. All legal proceedings in Russia are conducted in writing, be it observed.

Every one is at his post; but let us get quickly out of the midst of all these poor wretches who surround us: some are arguing gruffly, with a pen behind their ears; but others, and the greater number, are easily seated at their desks. Let us stop near this window: one of the clients of the place is arguing in a low voice with the secretary of the tribunal. The latter has come expressly to enter into this mysterious colloquy, leaving the soft chair he occupied by the side of his colleagues. The expression of his figure is not at all benevolent; he has a harsh look and contracted eyebrows. But the conversation becomes more animated; the pleader coolly puts his hand into his pocket; he withdraws it,—it is shut. This motion has not escaped the experienced eye of the secretary, and the cloud that covered his brow is dispersed as if by enchantment. He begins—"Perhaps,"

says he, casting the tail of his eye at the monied hand of the pleader, "but I can't promise you."—"I implore you," returns a suppliant voice, "it all depends on you." O happiness! The *employé* advances his hand; the pleader presses it tenderly between his own; and the two friends separate.

Wolfgang Menzel, one of the most polished and popular of German writers, is again in the field with a *Geschichte Europa's vom Beginne der französischen Revolution*, &c. ("History of Europe from the beginning of the French Revolution to the Congress of Vienna"); that is, from 1789 to 1815. The author informs us that he has endeavoured to collect everything characteristic and interesting from the highest sources; to place the materials of history in the clearest light, and order them in groups; to develop events out of their true motives; and to seek right and honour without prejudice, wherever it is to be found. He has succeeded in this endeavour, and has given us a book worth reading. Those who are acquainted with the manner of Menzel will expect to find strong opinions strongly expressed, and some of the creatures of man's idolatry rather scurvily treated, and they will not be disappointed. Of this most stirring period in the history of nations much has already been written; but there will still be a disposition to hear what the eloquent German has to say of it. We shall, no doubt, have the book in English dress; but done by our Transatlantic cousins, we expect.

We observe several recent poetical publications, but none deserving special notice. The revolution of 1848 gave voice to a few clear notes; but since then Germany, poetically and politically, has been singing very small. We observe, however, a work which will be prized by all lovers of the German language, and who have a relish for the literary curiosities of the past. *Fastnachtsspiele aus dem Fünfzehnten Jahrhundert* ("Shrove-tide Plays of the Fifteenth Century"), in three parts, containing altogether 1621 pages. This collection has been made by the Stuttgart Literary Association, from manuscripts found in the principal libraries of Germany. We cannot illustrate these Shrove-tide Plays, and they can only be enjoyed in the original. We simply desire to bring the work under the notice of scholars.

Stirling's *Cloister Life of Charles V.* has already had the honour of two German translations.

In France some interesting and important works have made their appearance. One is, *Histoire de l'Instruction Publique en Europe, et principalement en France, depuis le Christianisme jusqu'à nos Jours* ("History of Public Instruction in Europe, and chiefly in France, from the Intro-

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duction of Christianity to the present time"). The idea of such a book is altogether a happy one. Such a history need be any but a dreary one. It is necessarily the history of the progress of human knowledge as well as school characteristics and modes of tuition. We had almost omitted to say that the name of the author is A. Vallet de Virville. A good portion of his book is occupied with the history of the University of Paris. The division of the students into nations, the nature of their studies, the methods of instruction, the manners and the costume of the students, lower schools, the education of women, and similar topics, are all carefully attended to.

A cognate work is *Alcuin et son Influence Littéraire, Religieuse et Politique chez les Franks*; par M. Francis Monnier ("Literary, Religious, and Political Influence of Alcuin among the Franks"). Alcuin was our countryman. He was born in York, it is supposed; at all events, he was educated in that city, and taught afterwards in the same school where he had been a scholar. He was made keeper of the library which Egbert had founded in the cathedral there, and afterwards became a deacon of the cathedral—a rank in the priesthood which his modesty would never permit him to take beyond. Returning from Rome, whither he had been sent to procure the pallium for Einbald, Alcuin passed through Parma, where the Emperor Charlemagne then was, and by this monarch was induced to take up his residence in France, which he did the same year (780). His patron bestowed upon him several ecclesiastical livings; but his time was chiefly occupied as a teacher of what was called the *totum scibile*—the entire amount of human learning—which indeed was not great, and very little of what was known had yet penetrated France. "Before the seigneur le King Charles," says the Monk of Angoulême, "there was no study of the liberal arts in France." It is supposed that he taught chiefly at Aix-la-Chapelle, then the chief residence of the Emperor, who himself, with his children and the lords of his court, attended the good deacon's teachings. He was skilled in Latin, and had some acquaintance with Hebrew and Greek. We can vouch for it that he was a good penman, for the large folio Bible exhibited in the British Museum be, as is stated, in his handwriting. His old age was devoted to theological studies, and to amending translations of the Scriptures. He died in 804. From the schools founded by Alcuin sprang, it has been conjectured, the University of Paris. M. Monnier has supplied some new particulars respecting the life of Alcuin. His attainments have been overrated; but no doubt he was regarded as a miracle of learning at the rude court of Charlemagne. The author supposes that Alcuin knew, or at least might have known, the fundamentals of Aristotle's logic, and proves it, on the one hand, by calling to mind that Pepin the Short had received from Pope Paul I. the text even of the *Organon*—and, on the other, by alleging that Master Alcuin knew Greek. This, however, has been contested by other critics, who state that, if he was acquainted with Greek, he made but sorry use of it; and, to confirm their opinion, among other things, state that Alcuin composed certain verses, to be used as a preface to the treatise of the *Ten Categories*, attributed to St. Augustine, in the Middle Ages. These verses commence:

Hunc Augustino placuit transferre magistro  
De veterum gazis Græcorum clave latina.

Says the critic, If knowing Greek, and having the text of the *Organon* under his eyes, how could Alcuin see in the *Categories* attributed to Augustine a Latin version of the *Categories* of Aristotle? The only answer we can venture on behalf of our countryman is the very natural one: perhaps he did not know better.

Monsieur le Comte d'Escayrac de Lauture has been travelling in the desert of Soudan, and is about publishing his observations. His book is even now in the press. Judging from the few extracts he has already communicated to the public, it should be a highly interesting one. We give a snatch of it:

#### AN ARAB'S NOTIONS OF EQUALITY.

"What do you think of equality?" I asked an Arab chief one day. "Do you believe that all men are equal?" "Without doubt," said he; "all men are equal as the fingers of the hand." Showing me his slim, nervous hand, he continued: "Behold!" said he, "look at these five fingers; their origin is common; they cannot be parted without grave wounds; but one of them is long, the others shorter.

If all were alike I could neither touch, nor strike, nor grasp. Be sure it is with men as with the fingers of the hand."

The author believes that the Arab is only to be governed by force—that force alone can tame his proud spirit, and bridle his wild impulses of freedom.

It has sometimes been thought possible to govern the Arabs by mildness; this is a negative government. In treating them with respect, in listening to their advice, in seeking to persuade rather than constrain them, in yielding to their caprices, we may conciliate their friendship; but to have the friendship of the Arab is not to be his master. His contributions are slowly made, or not at all. There is no security upon the roads—there is only an exchange of compliments. We give a great deal to get promises only; we humble ourselves without being profited. The sole means of governing the Arabs is force. It is the sole indeed that a power in real earnest ought to employ: they will always submit to this, and will never resist it long. But the force must be force, and nothing else.

There are lively sketches given by the author of Oriental character, life, and manners, and no lack of personal adventure to bear the reader pleasantly along. Another book of travels is in preparation by M. Ferdinand Denis, supplied from the papers of an able administrator, P. V. Malouet, who was Minister of Marine in 1814. In 1744, he was sent out by M. Sartine to Guiana; and, being a shrewd observer and facile recorder, his memoirs contain much that is interesting not only to the naturalist, but to the general reader. It was his fortune, not unmixed with terror, to witness that strange phenomenon peculiar to the Brazilian coasts, *Ras de marée*. When the sea is perfectly calm, a huge wave is sometimes seen advancing with rushing sound, and threatening to engulf the frail piroque in its headlong speed. The coolness and address of the Indians under such circumstances, and the dexterity with which they avoid an almost inevitable catastrophe, is admirably described. We have accounts too of black ants, and creeping abominations, that make the flesh crawl.

It was in the Savannas of Iracoubo, (he says), where I saw the most astonishing, the most frightful spectacle it is possible to conceive; and though it was not new to the inhabitants of Guiana, I am not aware of any traveller who mentions it. We were ten men on horseback, two in advance. One of the negroes who formed the advanced guard came back at full gallop, crying out to me from the distance: "Stop, Sir, come and see serpents en pile!" He pointed with his hand to the middle of the Savannah, to an elevated object that looked like a pile of arms. M. de Prévile then said to me, "This is certainly one of those collections of serpents which entangle themselves together after a severe storm, that I have heard speak of, but have never seen. Let us advance cautiously; we must not approach them too suddenly." We advanced while he was speaking; I had my eyes fixed upon the pyramid, which appeared immovable. When we were within ten or twelve paces, our horses, from terror, would not let us pass them, and I had no great desire. All at once the pyramidal mass began to stir, and a horrid hissing broke out; and thousands of snakes rolled spirally one upon the other, darted their hideous heads out of the circle, showing us their fangs and sparkling eyes. I confess I was the first to recede; but when I saw that the redoubtable phalanx rested at its post, and appeared more disposed to defend itself than attack, I made a turn to discover the meaning of this order of battle, which faced the enemy in every direction. I sought to discover the object of this monstrous assemblage, and concluded that this species of serpent had to fear some colossal foe, which might be the great snake or the cayman, and that they assembled thus when they saw him, in order to attack him in mass."

## ITALY.

(FROM OUR ITALIAN CORRESPONDENT.)

Florence, September 15.

The series of frescoes, by Giotto, in a chapel at Santa Croce, first discovered, under a covering of whitewash, by an artist named Morelli, and restored on commission given by a friar of the adjoining Franciscan convent (whose humility has prevented the publication of his name), by another artist, Bianchi, with some retouching of the original colours, may be considered to add to the celebrity even of him whose fame Dante says had obscured that of all others in his art:

Credelte Cimabue nella pittura  
Tener lo campo; ma ora ha Giotto il grido, &c.;

and they will certainly add to the attractiveness of this church, which is a perfect museum of early art, not less than a sanctuary of the illustrious dead. They occupy one of the small quadrangular chapels, con-

tiguous to the choir, and also to that chapel of the same form in which were discovered, a few years since (alike concealed by a barbarously-applied coating of whitewash), the other series by Giotto representing the story of St. John Baptist, and where it is still expected that further treasures may be brought to light by the removal of that unsightly covering from the upper walls. The restoration of the former chapel (called that of the Bardi) had been going on for several weeks, during which period it was scarcely possible to obtain admission for a moment; and on Sunday, 11th of September, when it was finally thrown open, the newly exposed paintings attracted crowds to S. Croce. They occupy the partition walls, the vaulted ceiling, and the space around a Gothic window, above the altar, which alone illuminates the chapel from one side, the other side being open to the spacious and majestic transept of this temple. On the opposite walls are represented the main incidents in the life of St. Francis, that favourite hero of mystic devotion in poetry and art, whose entire history is elsewhere illustrated in the same church, and are divided into six scenes, the scale of figures diminishing at inverse ratio to the distance whence they are seen, the largest perhaps two and a half or three feet in height. The series begins at the uppermost compartment on the left hand, where we see two groups opposite each other in front of a parallelogram building, with an open portico and columns extending along the centre of its upper story, small arched windows, and a richly moulded cornice; the actors of the scenes appear agitated by some strong interest variously affecting them, while from one side advances, as if to remonstrate, a person in long robes, whom we may recognise as the father of St. Francis endeavouring to recall his son, the youthful saint, who has just formed the resolution of abandoning all, family, wealth, and prospects of distinction, to embrace the life of a poor and mortified missionary; he (the latter) appears in the opposite group, half enveloped in the episcopal vestments which are thrown round his otherwise nude figure by the mitred prelate of Assisi, near to whom stands a Cardinal (recognisable by his scarlet robes), and another ecclesiastic in black, whilst the outer figure of each group is that of a child led by the hand of a female, apparently to express the curiosity of the populace at what is passing on the piazza of Assisi. Below this appears St. Francis, in the long brown habit of his order, preaching before an altar to a company of religious, similarly vested, who are seated on each side and in front, the whole group being inclosed within three sides of a screen, that divides the chancel from the rest of the church: the attitude of the saint here is imposing, with the arms outspread, the countenance extatic and full of the earnestness of spiritual appealing; a halo encircles his head, which in this, as well as all other instances throughout the series, is gilt and raised in stucco from the surface; another friar of the order also stands on the same level, but more distant from the altar, with the same circlet of sanctity round his head. Below we see the funeral of St. Francis—that ceremony passing in a cloister surrounded by arcades, with round arches, in the centre of which is laid the dead figure on a bier; numerous groups of friars assembled at the head and foot, some wearing the surplice and stole over their dark habits, some with burning tapers, one carrying incense, another the processional cross, to which is suspended a banner (precisely as we see in the processions of friars, for funeral occasions or the attendance on the Holy Sacrament, at this day). Of this group various individuals are kneeling and kissing the *stigmata* miraculously impressed, according to the old tradition, on the hands, the feet, and left side of the "Doctor Angelicus;" another, whose back is turned, and who alone is in lay vestments, wearing a scarlet robe and cape of ermine, also prostrate before the bier, and introducing his hand into the wound on the left side, where the gown of the deceased saint is left open. Immediately above hovers in air the spirit, recognised by the lineaments and costume, alike answering to those of the living, which is borne by little floating cherubim into glory; but none seem conscious of this beautiful vision.

Turning to the opposite wall, the lower compartment is divided into two distinct subjects, one in which we see St. Francis sitting up in bed, still wearing the friar's habit, whilst several others of his order stand before him, one in a surplice and stole, reading from a book, as if to administer the last Sacraments; another in which the saint appears as a vision (a half figure) to Pope Innocent III., who is asleep on a couch, vested and mitred pontifically—a somewhat childish idea of the private habits of his Holiness, whilst two chamberlains, one entirely in white, the other entirely in red, are sleeping, stretched on the ground, in front of the couch; and it is curious to observe how closely their costume resembles that used by some of the inferior pages at the Vatican to this day. In the compartment above we see the court of the Soldan, before whom St. Francis, attended by another friar, is preparing to pass through flames kindled on the floor, to attest the divinity of his doctrine and mission: the sovereign of the infidels is seated on an elevated throne, under a Gothic canopy elaborately carved and moulded; pointing towards the saint, he turns round with an expression of reproachful indignation to a group of elders, probably the Ulemas of the Mahomedan laws, whose attitudes





## II. EPIDEMICS AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

**The Cholera.**—The Quarterly Return of the Registrar-General, just issued, presents a view of the progress of cholera in 1848, as compared with its progress in 1853 to the present time. On both occasions (as likewise in 1832) it appeared first in the sea-ports. In 1848 it commenced in October; in 1853 in August. The present epidemic has attacked us earlier in the year; but it has not yet, in the aggregate, been more fatal in London than it was during the same number of weeks in 1848. It has been far more destructive in Newcastle; but the Registrar-General accounts for it, not by admitting that the epidemic is in its nature more destructive than its predecessors, but by the impurity of the water used by the inhabitants.

In London, cholera continues to make progress; it is advancing slowly and insidiously, checked by the coldness of the weather, but evidently becoming incubated in the metropolis, and waiting only for a temperature favourable for its development to break out in all its former severity and destructiveness. The winter and early spring are yet before us. In 1848 it lingered through the winter, assumed new virulence in May 1849, and gradually became more and more fatal until the month of August, when it began to decline. We have, therefore, six months, in all probability, to prepare (not for the cholera, for it is already among us, destroying more than 100 per week, but) for that fearful epidemic form of the visitation which spares neither age nor station. Will this merciful interval be employed wisely? When Parliament meets, will it seriously and promptly take the matter in hand? Or will the pollutions of our river remain as they are, and the atmosphere of our dwellings poisoned by the reeking pestilence accumulated in our sewers? One thing is certain, that the best exertions of the parochial authorities, backed by the zeal of the Board of Health, the Nuisance Act, and the recent "Order in Council," can never effectually make head against the cholera. They may reduce the number of the victims by a few scores; they may effect a physical and even a moral reformation in the lowest neighbourhoods; they may diffuse comfort and health over places once pestilent and wretched; but unless they have the authority now given to the Commissioners of Sewers, with ten times their pecuniary means, they will only show by what they have done, what Government ought to have done for the preservation of the lives of Her Majesty's subjects. At present, however, the most fatal and destructive source of pollution is the Thames. The water supplied to the inhabitants of the south side of the Thames is chiefly taken from the river, and consists of the river water, mixed by its tidal ebb and flow, with the abominations of a thousand sewers. And that this water, when drunk or used for culinary purposes, is a source of disease, cannot be doubted. Of the 102 deaths from cholera which occurred in the metropolis, in the week ending Nov. 5, fifty-nine were among the inhabitants living on the southern side of the Thames.

Let this fact be compared with the sanitary history of Newcastle and other places. During the epidemic of 1849, it happened that the water with which Newcastle was supplied was comparatively pure; whereas in 1853, when the cholera broke out there, "the city was supplied with water containing a strong solution of the contents of the sewers." In the former epidemic, Newcastle and Gateshead were visited with a mild form of the disease; in 1853, "the epidemic poison was no sooner introduced into that region than it, as it were exploded, and destroyed nearly 2000 lives." A similar effect was the result of the same cause in Hull, in 1849. And other examples may be cited, in which the converse happened; as in Exeter, where the inhabitants, after having suffered severely from cholera in 1832, obtained pure water, and escaped its ravages in 1848-49.

"The intensity of the epidemic at Newcastle-upon-Tyne," continues the Registrar-General, "is, under the circumstances, no decided proof that, in its essential form, cholera is now more fatal than it was before; but it is unquestionably a warning to those towns which receive their water from polluted tidal rivers, to abandon such sources, and to accelerate their works for supplying the population with pure water before June next, otherwise the death-registers may, it is to be feared, be filled with the names of innumerable victims of a practice which is as degrading as it is destructive to the English nation."

## SCIENCE AND INVENTIONS.

## SCIENTIFIC SUMMARY.

## PHYSICS.

**ON MOLECULAR INFLUENCES.**—In the last number of this journal, the influence excited by the molecular structure of a body was explained with respect to wood, when it was shown that many of the mechanical arts, and indeed even the very vitality of the tree, immediately depended on the axes of conduction, cohesion, liquid permeability, and of heat. Further research also shows us that very many cosmical and vital arrangements are dependent upon this molecular structure of the various minerals and organisms of which our world consists; and yet, that the proof of existence of this structure is so reconceivable as to be apprehensible solely through the influence exerted by it on the agents we recognise under the

term *forces*; and furnishing evidence of a division of matter, far too minute to be visible to the highest microscopic power.

To return for an instant to the conducting power of wood on the vitality of the plant:—De la Rive and De Candolle remarked the influence which its feeble conducting power in a lateral direction exerted in preserving within the tree the warmth it acquires from the soil; a power enabling it to resist any sudden changes of temperature which would be injurious to it, whether these changes consist of an abstraction of heat from within, or an accession of it from without, by a rapid alteration in the atmospheric temperature. But Nature has gone further even than this, providing an additional protection for her favourites, and to which we must in great measure attribute the facility of acclimatisation exhibited by trees, evidenced in our Arboretums—where we find trees from the Tropics and from the Pole growing side by side. This protection is the bark, a sheathing of feeble conducting power than the tree itself, even in the direction in which wood transmits heat with the greatest difficulty; since the average conducting power of the wood, to the bark of our common forest trees, in the worst direction for the transmission of heat, is as five is to three, the latter number representing the lateral conductivity of the bark.

Now let us compare wood and silica (rock-crystal): the average lateral flux of heat through the former may be regarded as twelve, whilst that of silica, or crystal, as ninety. On this simple experimental fact, Dr. Tyndall justly observes, how different must be the meteorological effects of wood and of silica (sand) when they exist in sufficient surfaces to influence the climate. Amongst the most prominent climatic influences, Humboldt mentions the nature of the soil and of vegetation. The general influence of an arid and exposed soil has long been known; but the part played specially by silica in producing these effects has hitherto had little if any importance attached to it. Let us, however, substitute another mineral for the siliceous sand of which the Sahara chiefly consists, and we shall find that a very different state of things would be set up. Take the common mineral, gypsum, and replace the sand by it: on examination, retaining our former numerical ratios, the conducting power of gypsum turns out to be but 19, silica being 90; so that the former substance is scarcely superior in its power of transmitting heat to wood, whilst, as regards the latter, Dr. Tyndall assures us he has the strongest grounds for believing that *silica possesses a higher conductive power than some of the metals*.

Compare now what takes place from sunrise to the hottest period of the day in a densely-wooded region, with that in the African deserts. In the first case the heat slowly penetrates the masses of foliage and wood, and when the hottest time has passed, the yielding up of the heat, whether by radiation or conduction, is equally slow. In the desert, however, the vast expanse of sand exposed to the sun becomes burning hot towards the afternoon, but cools again with equal facility when this period has passed; so that the ranges of temperature must be far greater in the latter than in the former cases: bearing out the remark of Mrs. Somerville respecting the Sahara, where during "the glare of noon the air quivers with the heat reflected from the red sand, and in the night it is chilled under a clear sky sparkling with its hosts of stars." Were gypsum the prevailing mineral here, it is very certain these extremes of temperature would not attain to anything like the present extent.

Before quitting this subject, the reader must have patience to bear with a few more experiments and observations on some other vegetable and animal substances, all tending to the one great issue of Natural Science, the adaptability and fitness of parts to their special ends. Thus the walrus's tooth gives 16, on the ratio scale above adopted; East Indian ivory 17; whalebone, the rhinoceros's horn, and cow horn, each 9. If we consider the density of ivory we should, *a priori*, expect its conducting power to be high; but it turns out to be much inferior even to wood in the direction of the fibre. This arrangement must greatly conduce to the animal's comfort: were these tusks capable of assuming a high temperature during the daily exposure to the sun of the tropics, and of losing it at night, the alternation would necessarily inconvenience and impair the health of the elephant, which is thus protected by the low conducting power of the material of his tusks. With the horns of the rhinoceros and the cow, especially with those of the latter, placed as they are in such close proximity with the brain, the benefit accruing from the bad conducting power of horn is at once evident; and the Professor's remark on the protective influence of this quality as respects the brain, is too well-founded to quarrel with; not so, however, were we thus inclined, the reflection following on "our own enlightened intellect," which savours somewhat of irreverence.

Substances rich in carbon, whether animal or the vegetable ones analogous to these, together with some hydro-carbons, as leather, bees-wax, glue, raw and boiled muscle, kernels of nuts, gutta-percha, and india-rubber, present the greatest obstacles to the passage of heat through them; thus, whilst the transmissive power of silica for heat in a given time is, as before stated, 90, that of the substances just enumerated is represented by 0, so that

more complete instances of imperviousness to heat cannot be met with. If it be assumed, which none will deny, that a rapid accession or loss of heat must be very injurious to animal life, the value of this provision of the low conductivity of animal substances is most obvious; a provision which undoubtedly exerts a very great influence in producing the remarkable constancy of temperature exhibited by the human body in every climate. It is this property also, when combined with the low conducting power of the air, that enables us to sustain temperatures above the melting point of some of our common metals without injury, and affords an easy and rational explanation of the experiments of Chantrey and Blagden, as well as of the more popular feats of Chabert, the formerly renowned "Fire-King."

## METEOROLOGY.

**THE RESULTS OF THE LATE SCIENTIFIC BALLOON ASCENTS.**—The objects of these ascents, made, as it will be recollected, during the Autumn of last year, under the direction of the Kew Observatory Committee of the British Association, were, chiefly, to ascertain the variations of the temperature, and of the humidity of the atmosphere above the surface of the earth, as well as the procuring of specimens of air for analysis, taken at different elevations.

Four ascents took place, namely, on August 17 and 26, October 21, and November 16, from Vauxhall; the observations being made at half-minute to minute intervals during the ascent, being equal to about an observation to every 200 to 300 feet of height. Amongst the principal results, Mr. Welsh states, that the progress of temperature is not regular at all heights; but that at a certain elevation (varying on different days), the regular diminution becomes arrested, and for the space of about 2000 feet the temperature remains constant, or even slightly increases. In the regions above this belt of air it again falls, diminishing, for the most part, regularly throughout the remainder of the height observed.

During the two first ascents this peculiar suspension of the progress of the temperature was found to be strikingly coincident with a large and rapid fall in the temperature of the dew-point; the same result was observed in the ascent of Nov. 10. On Oct. 21, a dense cloud, through which the balloon passed at a height of about 3000 feet, interfered with these observations; but there appears to be, on the whole, good reason for believing that, in the zone of the atmosphere where the condensation of aqueous vapours goes on with the greatest rapidity, heat is developed, which has the effect of raising the temperature of the higher air to a point above what it would have been had the rate of decrease been uniformly progressive from the earth upwards. From the observations made during the first three ascents, when corrected for the various disturbing causes to which they were subjected, it is found that a height above the earth's surface, varying from 2904 to 292 feet, corresponds to a fall of one degree of Fahrenheit's thermometer, whilst the ascent of Nov. 10th indicates 312 feet to a degree. The agreement in the three first observations is very striking, whilst the variation of the last is but 1-13th of the whole.

The report of the analyses of the air is very unsatisfactory, and far too vague to be of any service in confuting or confirming former results, and the opinion founded thereon as to the composition of the atmosphere.

## APPLIED SCIENCE.

**USE OF GLYCERINE IN THE ARTS.**—Glycerine, the basis of most oils and fats, was discovered by the celebrated Swedish chemist Scheele, about three-quarters of a century ago; he called it "the sweet principle of oils," from its saccharine taste and syrupy consistence. Long as this substance has been known, it is but lately that any use has been made of it; its first application being in medicine, where its power of penetrating and softening the skin, and consequent utility in assisting the cicatrisation of skin wounds, which is partly due to its excluding in some measure the air, has rendered it valuable to the medical practitioner. By a very simple process, M. Brubère-Perrin obtains this substance, which has hitherto been a waste product in many manufactures, in a scentless and colourless form. In this state it mixes in every proportion with water, alcohol, and vinegar; and, from its peculiar non-vaporisable nature, softens bodies and keeps them moist, without greasing them; like alcohol, it dissolves the essential oils, and, when pure, it neither turns rancid nor undergoes any change. The inventor of this purifying process uses this material as an ingredient in soap, where its cosmetic powers will prove valuable; and also applies it to the preparation of various kinds of perfumery. Glycerine has been already employed to keep the clay used in modelling properly moist, for which it is well fitted; as it also is for many other art-processes, where a permanent state of moisture without greasiness is a desideratum. HERMES.

## ART AND ARTISTS.

## SUMMARY.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY has found a place, not without difficulty, for a statue of Sir Robert Peel. How long must it be before the effigies of England's worthies are

conveniently housed? The Abbey is crowded to excess, not only with monuments of real interest, but with marble extravaganzas of every conceivable kind. But, like some of the city graveyards, it still continues to hold out beyond all belief. We cannot say that the late addition to our collection of petrified notabilities is a very happy one. Mr. Gibson's statue of Peel is an anachronism, in every sense of the word. We have outlived the age of fancy dresses in statuary; and classical costumes, applied to the limbs of modern personages, have ceased to please. Here, however, we have Sir Robert Peel, arrayed in what is meant, we suppose, for the garb of a Roman senator; in fact, it is a blanket awkwardly hung over the shoulders, and looking perpetually as if it were about to fall off. Heavy boots, with soles half an inch thick, remind us rather of senatorial performances on the moors than on the floor of the House of Commons. The massive dignity of Peel's figure is quite lost in the attitude in which he is placed. Throughout, the details are unhappily imagined. The very roll of paper held in the hand produces a disagreeable effect, being represented bent or crushed, when the eye desiderates rather a rigid outline, by way of contrast. All the defects seem to arise from the fundamentally absurd idea of dressing up an English statesman in a costume which does not belong to him, and which would have made him look very ridiculous and uncomfortable had he put it on. Chantrey's two statues of Canning and Sir John Malcolm, both in modern costume, are models of ease and dignity compared with the stilted pretentiousness of the travestied Peel.

We are, it seems, to have a statue of Prince Albert on the site of the Crystal Palace, as a memorial of the great event of 1851. A very general feeling prevails that the compliment meant to the Prince is a mistake, and that such a work as the Palace of Industry should be otherwise commemorated. Speaking merely in the interest of art, we think it would be more desirable that some work should be chosen for this purpose which might give wider scope to the fancy of our sculptors than the portrait of an individual.

Marlborough House has again been opened, with its museum of objects illustrative of the true principles of ornamental art. The collections are made with a view to show what is to be avoided, as well as what is to be admired and imitated. Many of the most pretentious objects, particularly among the gorgeous manufactures of Sevres, are precisely the things to be shunned as models. Again, many of the specimens of really correct principles of ornamentation are by no means very showy, or perhaps even among the best of their kind. Properly understood, however, they are not less useful; and the excellent catalogues which have been compiled as guides to the visitor or student, do not fail to point out the merits and demerits of the various objects of display with unshrinking impartiality. Already the fruits of the schools of design are beginning to manifest themselves in the products of industry. It is impossible not to be struck with the taste and beauty of many of the fabrics which now decorate our shop-windows; in many the effect of the principles of art which have of late been so zealously inculcated, are plainly discernible.

We understand that a large fresco is about to be executed in the Hall of Lincoln's Inn, at the north end of the building. Report says that the painting is to be from the pencil of Mr. Watts.

The Royal Academy has just elected Millais an associate of the body. The choice does the Academy the highest honour, and shows a spirit of impartiality and comprehensiveness which has not always signalised its elections.

#### TALK OF THE STUDIOS.

THE erection of a monument dedicated to Prince Albert on the site of the Hyde Park Palace is now secured. The Lord Mayor is daily receiving new adhesions to the scheme. Already the subscriptions amount to upwards of 5000*l.*—The foundation stone of the monument about to be erected to the memory of Dr. Moir, of Musselburgh ("Delta") was laid on Tuesday on the site of the end of Bridge-street in that town.—The Wellington Statue Committee of the City have selected the models sent in by Adams, Behnes, Bell, Foley, Smith, and Thomas, as entitled to the premium of 100 guineas each. The number of models before the committee was thirty.—The judges appointed for selecting from the various models sent in as competitors for the commission to execute the Manchester monument to the late Duke of Wellington have given their decision in favour of the design of Mr. Matthew Noble, who accordingly becomes the sculptor of the work—for the sum, we believe of 7000*l.*—Mr. Richardson, the sculptor, has been commissioned by the officers of the 43rd Regiment to erect suitable memorials to those officers of the regiment who fell in the discharge of their duty in the late Caffre war in South Africa. To Captain Ormsby Gore, for Oswestry Church; to Lieutenant the Hon.—Wrottesley, for Tottenhall Church, near Wolverhampton; and to Dr. Davidson, for St. Mary's Church, Perth—the designs submitted having received the approval of Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. Percy Egerton Herbert and the other officers on the committee.—The famous picture gallery of Mr.

Thomas Baring, M.P., in Grosvenor-street, narrowly escaped entire destruction by fire a few days since. Most fortunately, the gallery and all the drawing-rooms of the suite had been dismantled only a few days previously, and the only pictures remaining on the walls were those of modern artists. The valuable ancient Italian and Spanish pictures, for which this collection is so remarkable, had been removed from the walls, and, being stacked up close together in one corner of the gallery, they have scarcely suffered any damage from the heat. The same remark will apply to the Belgian and Dutch works, of which there are many almost priceless specimens.

A committee, comprising the names of the most prominent of living men of science, has been formed to erect a monument to the memory of Arago.—The French newspapers say that Horace Vernet has discovered that the preparation of colours with olive oil is not only more convenient in many respects than the oil preparations generally employed, but makes paintings better and more durable.—One of the most celebrated vestiges of Roman domination in these parts, says the *Courrier de Lyon*, the Temple of Augustus and Livia, at Vienne, is about to be at length uncovered and restored, by the joint funds of Government and of the Commune. The former subscribes a sum of 150,000 francs (6000*l.*), and the latter engages to supply what further amount may be needed.—The King of the Belgians has given his consent for the fine pictures by the modern Belgian artists, belonging to him, and now in the Dublin Exhibition, to be exhibited in London for a month, at Messrs. Grave's Gallery in Pall-mall.—From Munich it is stated that the new Pinacotheka, destined to contain the works of modern artists, and the *Ruhmhalle* (Temple of Glory) near Ratisbon, are completed. The former monument has been opened to the public.—At the town of Soleure, in Switzerland, preparations are making to hold an Exhibition of Fine Arts in March next—the first of the kind ever organised in Helvetia. Foreign artists are invited to contribute.—"The Last Supper" of Leonardo da Vinci, being painted in and for the refectory of the Dominican convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, at Milan, has suffered so much from time and exposure, that its colours scaled off lately at every breath of air. The restorer of paintings, M. Steffano Barezzi, has, however, made a discovery, by which these decaying colours can be again combined together and fixed to the wall, which being tried on the above picture, has, it is stated, completely succeeded. Something has been said of removing the fresco from the wall altogether, and placing it on panel.

#### MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

##### NEW MUSIC.

*Marschau's Handbook for the Pianoforte.* Boosey and Sons. This method is simple and original, and seems to be well adapted to teach an attentive student the theory of music and the practice of the piano, without the aid of a master. M. Marschau is evidently an experienced instructor, as well as a sound musician.

##### MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC CHIT-CHAT.

It is Mr. Webster's intention to have an English version of MM. Scribe and Halévy's opera, *Nabab*, performed at the Adelphi Theatre.—It is now probable that Mme. Grisi and Signor Mario may sing for yet another season at the Royal Italian Opera.—At Brighton, Mme. Grisi and Signor Mario, supported by Mmes. Doria, Bellini, Signor Ciabatti, and other Italian artists, have been performing in the Theatre Royal.—Mr. G. V. Brooke appeared at the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, on Monday week, in the character of *Othello*. The enthusiasm of the audience was great. Mr. Brooke being summoned several times during the progress of the tragedy to receive their congratulations.—The series of royal theatrical diversissements in the temporary theatre in the Rubens room at Windsor Castle, under the management of Mr. Charles Kean, commenced on Thursday, the 10th of November.—Professor Sir Henry Bishop has been lecturing on English ballad music this week, at Crosby-hall, London; and Dr. Rimbault, at Edinburgh, in a course on the subject of Psalmody.—The first of Miss Dolby's *soirées musicales* for the season takes place this evening, the 15th, at her residence, Hindle-street, Manchester-square.—Overtures of Cherubini, ten in number, are about to appear in a uniform edition, for two pianoforte players, arranged by Herr Pauer.—The beautiful music of *Sardanapalus*, at the Princesses' Theatre, which is the composition of Mr. J. L. Hatton, is about to be published for the pianoforte.—A memorial to the late John Blewitt, the musical composer, is projected by his friends, as a mark of admiration of his character and appreciation of his genius.—The twenty-second season of the Sacred Harmonic Society commenced on Friday, the 11th inst., with Handel's Coronation Anthem, "Zadok the Priest," the same composer's Dettingen *Te Deum*, and Mozart's Twelfth Mass—three works which have been laid aside for some years, but which are well calculated to exhibit to advantage the society's gigantic band and chorus of 700 performers. Mr. Costa resumed his old post of conductor.

—The going through the accounts of the late festival at Gloucester has at length been completed. The result shows that the receipts were 3431*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.*, and that a surplus was left, after paying all expenses, of 68*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*—The curious case of *Lumley v. Gye* is still pending, and will be tried at the sittings after the ensuing Michaelmas Term.

Catherine Hayes has been very successful on the Pacific shore, and it is stated that she has sent home 50,000 dollars for the purchase of an estate.—As Mme. Sontag was returning from her concert in Brooklyn, she reached the end of the ferry wharf before the boat was made fast. Misjudging the distance of the boat, she attempted to step on board, but missed her footing and fell into the water. A gentleman jumped in after her, and kept her from being crushed between the boat and the bridge. In falling, her body was badly scratched, and one foot seriously bruised.—The French Emperor has given 80*l.* to the fund for erecting a monument to Weber.

—A Paris paper says that Mdle. Augustine Brohan, one of the most admired actresses of the Théâtre Français, will have to quit the stage, owing to the glare of the gas-lights having destroyed the sight of one of her eyes, and seriously menaced that of the other.—Mdle. Sophie Cruvelli has signed an engagement with the Opera for two years at a salary of 4000*l.* sterling a year. She is to choose her own parts, to play only twice a week, and to have four months' vacation in each year. In case she should be called upon to sing three times a week, the extra night is to be paid 60*l.* A separate engagement is entered into for two months of the lady's vacation, during the Universal Exhibition of 1855, at the rate of 1,000*l.* per month, so that the salary for the second year will, in fact, be 6000*l.*—A new opera by Herr Lindpaintner, the *Corsair*, is about to be given at Stuttgart.—The municipality of Strasburg has come into possession of estates producing upwards of 2000*l.* a year, under the condition that the whole of the revenue shall be employed in encouraging the drama and music in the town. The money has been left by a M. Appfelf, of Wissemburg. The municipality is to be the sole judge of the precise manner in which the liberal bequest is to be disbursed.—Tidings have arrived from St. Petersburg, announcing the commencement of the operatic season there, with *Il Barbiere*, in which Madame de la Grange and Signor Calzolari made their *débuts*.

#### GOSSIP OF THE LITERARY CIRCLES.

A NEW poem by the author of *The Roman* is announced for publication.—The *Times* recently noticed at great length the poems of "A." the first of which was issued some two years ago under the title of "The Strayed Reveller." The critic thinks "A." not unworthy of the poet's name. "In literary circles he has already found admirers; but we apprehend that to the generality of readers he remains unknown, while the world is full of the praises of far inferior writers." Mr. Sims, of the British Museum, will have ready in a few days *A Handbook to the Library*, containing a brief history of its formation, and of the various collections of which it is composed, with some account of the public libraries of London.—The *Città Cattolica* of Genoa announces that a song by Dante, hitherto unpublished, has been found in the library of Prince Barberini, at Rome.—Baron Von Humboldt is engaged in the preparation of a new production on the *Outline Form of Mountain Peaks*, working up original observations and drawings made during the course of his various wanderings. He assured a late visitor that the greater part of his literary labour was of necessity performed while others slept, as the hours of usual labour were with him consumed by the demands of the King. He added that he early made the discovery that he could get on very well with four hours of sleep.—Auguste Comte has just issued the third volume of his *Système de Politique Positive*, which contains the "Philosophy of History."—The Chinese insurgents have prepared a new almanack. It excludes the demonology and astrologic superstition which overload other almanacks, especially those brought out in the interest of the reigning dynasty; it makes the year begin on the 7th instead of the 4th of February; it orders the observance of one day in the week as a Sabbath, but abolishes all other holidays; it solemnly adjures the people to be faithful to the insurgent cause, and to be brave in its defence; it proclaims that Tai Ping is sent on earth by God to do God's work; it records the titles, qualities, and duties of his principal chiefs,—one of them is designated "the prince who implores Heaven for the unfortunate;" and, finally, it divides the year into twelve months, each month being alternately either thirty or thirty-one days.

The English poetess Elizabeth Barrett Browning and her husband are residing at Rome. Mr. Hillard, an American author, in his *Six Months in Italy*, describes their home as one of the happiest he ever saw.—It is stated that Mr. Routledge has offered Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton 2000*l.* a year for the monopoly of his works for the next ten years, and that Sir Edward has closed with the offer.—Mr. John Bernard Burke, author of *The Peerage* and other works of historical and genealogical interest, has been appointed Ulster King of Arms, an office which his general ability as



well as his special studies eminently qualify him to fill.—The residence of Cooper, the novelist, at Albany, recently converted into an hotel, was burned down by the act of an incendiary on the 21st ult.—Mr. Ruskin, author of the *Stones of Venice*, is delivering, in Edinburgh, a series of lectures on architecture. His first essay was on the "General Construction of Domestic Buildings."—King's College, London, has been deprived of the services of Professor Maurice. A recent volume published by the Professor has provoked the scrutiny of the Council; and the result is, the removal of the reverend Professor from the chair of Ecclesiastical History.—Dr. Lyon Playfair has been lecturing the members of the People's College at Sheffield, whither he went in reply to a request made for instruction to the Board of Trade department in science and art. The Cutlers'-hall was crowded with the hard-working artisans of Sheffield, and various resolutions were passed in support of the movement for infusing science into education.—Dr. Pertz, the head librarian of the Royal Library at Berlin, has returned from his tour in England, undertaken for the purpose of examining if the principal libraries contained any materials that might assist him in the further prosecution of his great work, *Monumenta Germanie Historica*. The most valuable result of Dr. Pertz's inquiries in England consists, we understand, in his having obtained a transcript of the *Chronicon Placentinum*, which is of great importance for the times of the Emperors Frederick I. and II., and the original of which is in the British Museum.—Mr. Hind has discovered another planet, the ninth since the commencement of his systematic search in 1846. He observed it on the night of the 8th November, at 7h. 50m., in the constellation Taurus, about two degrees south of the ecliptic, appearing rather brighter than a star of the ninth magnitude. There are now known to be twenty-seven of these asteroid planets, or, as Mr. Hind terms them, "that extraordinary group of worlds," between Mars and Jupiter. The diurnal motion of the new planet at the present time is in right ascension one minute two seconds towards the west, and in declination about two minutes thirty seconds towards the south.—The Paris *Monteur* announces that the well-known novelist, M. Jules Sandeau, has been appointed librarian of the Bibliothèque Mazarine.—M. Michelet being in a bad state of health, arising from close application to his literary labours, is about to leave Paris for Nice, where he will spend the winter.—The authorities of Rochefort, in France, have opened a subscription for erecting a monument to the late Lieutenant Bellot in that, his native place. In their appeal to the public, they say that the highest commendation that can be passed on him is, that he was "as brave as Franklin." The sudden loss of this gallant French officer has been the occasion of several public and private meetings, his death being the source of the deepest regret both in England and France. An admirable portrait of him was painted for Lady Franklin, previous to his last departure for the Arctic regions, by Stephen Pearce. It is now in the hands of the eminent engraver, James Scott, and was exhibited at Willis's Rooms, at the public meeting.

The Irish Industrial Exhibition is closed.—The Liberal party in Glasgow University, smarting under the recollection of their defeat of last year, when the clan Argyll was routed by the adherents of Vice-royalty, have determined to renew the contest under new leadership—that of Mr. Alfred Tennyson.—An artisan in very humble circumstances, residing in Ipswich, has, after three years' labour, succeeded in constructing a model of a machine, 15 inches by 13, and 11½ deep, which is self-acting, after being put in motion by a screw.—By the *Magdalena* steamer, we have received accounts from Valparaiso, announcing the arrival there of the screw schooner *Isabel*, sent out many months since, by way of the Straits of Magellan, on an exploring expedition in search of Sir John Franklin. We are sorry to learn that a disagreement among the officers had led to an abandonment of the whole expedition.—From the report of the committee, just published, it appears that, since the 18th of October, 1852, when the Liverpool Free Library was opened, 111,723 volumes have been issued to readers; in addition to which there have been 16,960 readers of periodical publications, making a total of works perused of 128,683. Works of amusement form about one-half of all the books read.—The booksellers of Berlin have, with the aid of some wealthy citizens, established public libraries in different parts of the town, for the use of the working men. These libraries already possess 10,000 volumes, of which 2389 are of natural history, 702 of science, 1572 of geography and travels, and the rest principally biography and history.—A collection of English and foreign autographs, embracing those of several of the reformers and regicides, was lately sold by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson. Among the most curious specimens sold were two holograph letters of Oliver Cromwell, the only ones, it is believed, which have ever been put up to public auction, with the exception of one in the Strawberry-hill sale. They realised respectively the sums of 27l. and 9l., and, after a spirited competition, were bought by Messrs. Young and Holloway. A letter signed by Henry VIII. fetched 4l. 17s., and was bought by Mr. Barne, as was understood, for the British Museum. A long letter of Martin Luther, in the Latin tongue,

addressed to Hermann, but without date, was bought by Mr. Montague for 7l. 10s.

The *Athenæum* tells the following curious story:—Not very long ago, a person well known for his large and accurate knowledge of the sources of English history found himself by accident in one of our great dockyards. In one part of the yard he noticed some preparations for a bonfire,—and, with the instinct of an antiquary when old papers are in peril, he ran off to the scene. "What are these bundles?" he inquired of the ready minister of destruction. "Nothing but rubbish," said the man. The very tie of the parcels told the antiquary that they were letters, and of old date. "Where do they come from?" he asks. "Oh, they have been lying here no one knows how long; we want the room, and we are going to burn them out of our way." The antiquary took up a bundle of the doomed papers,—opened the first letter, and found that it was the original dispatch announcing to the Government, with all its details, one of the most important events in the reign of Charles the Second. Commanding the dockyard men not to set fire to the pile until superior orders could arrive, the antiquary posted to London, repaired to the Admiralty, stated the fact, and saved the papers. When carefully examined they proved to be as interesting a series of State documents as any in our national archives.

THE ARCTIC REGIONS.—There is a very general impression in naval circles that the discovery of the north passage by Captain McClure will be followed up next year by the dispatch of two steamers, the *Phœnix* and another of about equal power. When two steamers proceed through the ice near to each other, the forward motion of the last vessel prevents the ice closing again so soon as it is otherwise liable to do when there is only one vessel, and consequently it is much safer to proceed when two are employed instead of one. The officers and crews of both vessels would also have more confidence, when entering unexplored channels, when two vessels are near to each other, owing to the hope that there would be one to fall back upon in the event of any unforeseen accident occurring to the other. The ice of the Arctic Regions is the accumulation of ages, and it is surprising the small thickness that is formed in some years, and certainly not to such an extent that would render it difficult for steam-vessels to keep a passage open by repeatedly breaking through the newly formed ice; and the farther the vessels proceed beyond the true magnetic pole the warmer the water is found to prevail, and it requires a remarkably low state of temperature to form ice on the surface of the deepest parts of the Polar seas. Some remarkably fine lava was brought home by the officers of the *Phœnix* from Bank's-land, far finer and closer than the porous pumice-stone of the lava of Mount Etna. The plumbago is also of a fine description, and a number of mineral stones from Melville Island are remarkably heavy, whatever may be the nature of the metal of which they are composed, and appear to be worthy of being investigated as to their value, as they might be found worthy of becoming a subject of commercial enterprise. It is singular that none of the officers of the *Phœnix*, or of the vessels of the Arctic expeditions now in the far northern regions, had seen the comet which visited this sphere during the present year, and they were unaware of its existence until their return home.

#### DRAMA, PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS, &c.

SADLER'S WELLS.—*Midsummer Night's Dream*.

DRURY LANE.—Mr. Smith and the punsters.

LYCEUM.—Commencement of a *Bad Farce*.—*How to make Home Happy*.—Wright at *Last*.—*Pater versus Clatter*.

PRINCESS'S.—*The Lancers*; or, *the Gentleman's Son*.

HAYMARKET.—*Midas*.—*A Pretty Piece of Business*.

ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.

WEDNESDAY EVENING CONCERTS.

ALL the theatres are now open, but few are enterprising—doubtless reserving their strength and capital for Christmas. SADLER'S WELLS continues to draw crowds, and the crowds never fail to admire the beauty of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the perfection of Bottom, as delineated by Mr. Phelps. DRURY LANE fills nightly, but how or why is the mystery; seeing that its circus is smaller and its company not so well selected as those at Astley's. The belief gains ground, that Smith of Drury Lane is the great Smith of the day. He is not only a successful manager, but a public character; and, as with all public characters, he has become legitimate sport for the punsters. In that bad *Commencement* at the Lyceum, Mr. Wright informs the pit that Gustavus Brooke is so strong in tragedy, that Mr. Smith has found it necessary to employ a team of horses to supply his place! A bad joke, but proof that Drury Lane is once again a public building, and that Smith its manager is public property. To become such is a success indeed. At the OLYMPIC, *Plot and Passion* is a permanent attraction, and Mr. Robson an undoubted favourite.

LYCEUM.—Were we disposed to be severe, we should say, the *Commencement* of a *bad Farce*, is not quite the commencement, but an additional sign of, bad management having obtained at the Lyceum. Last season a long and dull drama sent the audience asleep, or away; now they are being worried by a

series of short and pointless pieces. The most remarkable is that in which Mr. Wright appears as a spectator in the pit, and makes his presence known by hissing the performers. For this he is called to account by Charles Matthews, who accuses him of being an emissary from a rival house. A short dialogue and some very stale puns follow, and Mr. Wright accepts an invitation to step upon the stage and show the audience what he can do. He is heartily welcomed. To this odd introduction succeeds a piece entitled *How to make Home Happy*, by Mr. Brough. Wright and Mrs. Frank Matthews bear the weight of it, but they show only how to make home unhappy. This they do much to the satisfaction of pit and gallery. Another novelty is *Wright at Last*. But it is unworthy of the Lyceum, and did not succeed with the house. Very different was the reception of Charles Matthews in the revived *Pater versus Clatter*, and the enjoyment of his rapid change of manner and costume. It is quite clear that the Lyceum has not started fairly. We miss Madame Vestris, and the refinement which her presence and her management throw over company and performances; and we did not want Wright, who lowers the tone of the house to the level on which he and Paul Bedford are all supreme. We hear, however, that the management is preparing a great Christmas treat for us.

THE PRINCESS'S has now fairly cast aside the heavy dramas in which it has delighted for eighteen months, and has produced a translation of *Le Fils de Famille*, which has a long time been awaiting the convenience of the manager. But for the appearance of another adaptation at the Adelphi, under the title of *The Discarded Son*, it might still longer have remained in Mr. Kean's portfolio of "reserves." The title is rendered, *The Lancers*; or, *the Gentleman's Son*. The piece differs from the Adelphi version in being more faithful to the original. It is not so funny; but it is more truthfully and carefully put upon the stage. The scenery is well executed and very varied, and much care and money have been expended upon the dresses. Here, however, we must cease to praise; for the acting of the principal characters is much inferior to that afforded us in the Strand. Mr. David Fisher, a debutant from Glasgow, sustains the chief part (the "gentleman's son") with care and earnestness; but he wants the finish of Leigh Murray. As with young actors generally, he overstrains the most effective scenes. He told his sorrows tragically rather than regretfully; and in the last act, where affected drunkenness is required, he overacted in such a manner as would have betrayed him to the dullest of colonels. But Mr. Fisher has nevertheless some good stuff in him; and the Princess's will enable him to show it to advantage. He was well received; and the piece was successful. The beautiful decorations, and correct and elegant dresses, would alone have assured it a favourable reception.

At the HAYMARKET Mr. Buckstone has tried still another revival—doubtless awaiting the advent of a new piece that shall seem to him likely to suit him, his company, and his audience. *Midas*, the favourite of the last century, affords Mrs. Featherstone opportunity for effective singing; and she avails herself of it in good earnest. Her *Apollo* can never become an attraction; but it pleased a rather fastidious audience. Mr. Compton gave to the character of *Pan* an appearance of novelty, which seemed to be estimated highly by the centurials, and who also welcomed "Pray Goody" as an old acquaintance.—[On Friday, a new piece (which we have not seen) entitled *A Pretty Piece of Business*, was produced.—Mr. Buckstone having already found revivals unequal to the requirements of his house. It is by Mr. Morton; and the critics speak of it approvingly, while they point to serious and manifest faults. It may almost claim to be classed as a comedy, though very brief. It has a clear and interesting plot; and it affords Buckstone ample scope for displaying his comic propensities in the character of a phlegmatic and timid doctor. "He kept the audience in roars," the reporters state.]

The ST. JAMES'S THEATRE is, as our contemporaries inform us, endeavouring to make "English Opera or Opera in English" acceptable to the London public; but in vain.

The WEDNESDAY EVENING CONCERTS are more successful, serving alike as a substitute for Jullien and an attraction for those who despise theatres.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### THE CHOLERA AND MEDICAL MEN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CRITIC, LONDON LITERARY JOURNAL.

Sir,—When that scourge cholera visits this country, it is with heartfelt sorrow I have witnessed the deaths of medical gentlemen, whose wives and families in many cases are left destitute. This is not as it should be. These gentlemen stand manly forward, and in the event of being stricken down, those dependent upon them ought, I think, to be provided for by the country. Times of cholera are, indeed, no ordinary times, and none are better aware of the dangers they have to encounter than medical gentlemen, yet they shrink not from the task. Many who have accumulated large fortunes might with prudence remove with their families when the pestilence enters their locali-

ties; but how few of them do so! In aid of their fellow-creatures they stand forward, fearless of all consequences to themselves, for the public welfare. Men of fortune, I say, generally act thus; but men of no fortune—men on whose exertions the welfare of their families and friends solely depends—also shrink not from their duties, notwithstanding the trying thought that they themselves may be swept off by the pestilence. And when they do fall, are they to be remembered only with regret? They certainly deserve better of their country. Their names should, I think, not only be ranked with the most honoured of their countrymen, but their families provided for from the public purse. I trust, Sir, the time is not far distant when the truth of what I state will be universally recognised, and that the families of all medical gentlemen who have fallen a sacrifice to public duty, will be fully taken care of by the Government of the day.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

Dumfries, 11th Nov. 1853.

A.

## OBITUARY.

**BEXFIELD.**—Last week, after a few days' illness, Dr. Bexfield, whose oratorio, *Israel Restored*, given at Norwich last year, was by no means the solitary sign of promise made by him.

**CLONCURRY.**—Recently, aged 81, Lord Cloncurry, known to literary readers as the author of his own memoirs. The last public act of the deceased nobleman was a donation to the Dublin Library, on condition that the institution should assume the title of the "Hibernian Athenaeum."

**DÜHLER.**—Recently, at Rome, M. Dühler, the well-known pianist and composer.

**DUPONT.**—Recently, in Paris, M. Dupont, a French dancer and ballet composer of great note in the first quarter of the present century.

**SAVILLE.**—Recently, in Bishopgate-street, suddenly, Mr. John Saville Fauch, whose name, in the person of himself and his family, has been for very many years connected with the theatres of England. He was a playwright as well as an actor, and his *Miller's Maid* and *Wapping Old Stairs* still keep the provincial stage.

**LERAY.**—In Australia, M. Anatole Leray, well known in France as a writer in the *Presse*, and who had been proscribed for the ultra tendency of his political opinions. He went to seek his fortune in Australia, and, just as he came in sight of land, the vessel in which he had taken his passage foundered.

**WOOLZ.**—On the 29th ult., at No. 10, Carburton-street, Portland-road, in the 63rd year of his age, Thomas Jonathan Woolz, Esq., formerly editor of the *Black Dwarf*.

**PICTURE OF MENCHIKOFF.**—Menchikoff has invariably refused to sit to any artist. He is about seventy years of age, of middle stature, has close-cut milk-white hair, a high open forehead, sharply-defined features, and a bright sparkling eye. His gait is haughty, but slightly limping, from a wound that he received in a singular manner at the siege of Varna, in 1828. One evening, having given some orders that he wished to see implicitly obeyed, he strolled through the camp; and, as he was returning to his quarters, he stopped and remained with his legs stretched wide apart while he enjoyed a pinch of snuff. Suddenly the report of a heavy gun was heard, and the Prince fell headlong to the ground. When he was taken up it was found that a cannon-ball had passed between his legs, and wounded him severely in the thigh. Prince Menchikoff is one of the most extensive landed proprietors in the empire, and counts his serfs by thousands; but, unlike the generality of the Russian nobles, he adds daily to his wealth. His economy is without a parallel, and, indeed, is stated to descend to parsimony of the lowest grade; but, however grinding his extortion in his patrimonial estate, on all grand state occasions his appearance, carriages, and suite are most magnificent. He possesses a superb mansion at St. Petersburg; his establishment of servants and equipage is on a scale of the most lavish expense; and he is surrounded by numerous aides-de-camp glittering in "barbaric gold and pearl." Another striking peculiarity of this remarkable man is the aversion he entertains for foreigners. Not one—even an ambassador—has ever been permitted to enter his palace. He is both rough and fickle; and, when anything offends him, becomes absolutely brutal. But, while he bends to the imperial yoke from motives of avarice or ambition, he revenges his official servitude by browbeating, threatening, and abusing all who have the misfortune to be connected with him; and, as he is a man of considerable talent and indomitable energy, he succeeds most marvelously in his amiable occupation. It is not therefore to be wondered at that he has many enemies. Menchikoff is married to the Princess Dolgorouki, by whom he has a son and a daughter.—*United States Gazette.*

**THE BATTLE OF THE BEES.**—A curious circumstance occurred a few days back at Guilleville, Eure-et-Loire. A small farmer had in a field about 2500 beehives, containing a vast number of bees. He sent a man with a cart, drawn by five horses, to remove some earth from the wall near which the hives were placed. The carter having occasion to go to the farmhouse, tied the horses to a tree. Almost immediately after a multitude of bees, either irritated at the shaking of their hives by the removal of the earth from the wall, or excited by the electricity with which the atmosphere happened to be charged, issued from their hives, as if in obedience to a given signal, and with

great fury attacked the horses. In an instant the poor animals were entirely covered with bees from head to foot; even their nostrils were filled with them. When the carter returned he found one of the horses lying dead on the ground, and the others rolling about furiously. His cries attracted several persons; one of them attempted to drive away the bees, but they attacked him, and he had to plunge into a pond, and even to place his head under water for a few seconds, in order to escape from them. The curé of Guilleville also attempted to approach the horses, but he too was put to flight by the enraged insects. At length two fire engines were sent for, and by pumping on the bees a great number were killed on the horses, or put to flight. The horses, however, were so much injured that they died in an hour. The value of the bees destroyed was 1500 francs, and of the horses 2500 francs. A few days before bees from the same hives killed seventeen goslings.

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